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LIFE AND TIMES

OF

STEIN.

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LIFE AND TIMES

OF

STEIN,

OR

GERMANY AND PRUSSIA

IN THE

NAPOLEONIC AGE.

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BY

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VOLUME III.

FRONTISPIECE.

STEIN in old age.

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Prussia after the Peace of Vienna, 1815.

PART VII.

RETURN FROM EXILE.

God gave him reverence for laws,
Yet stirring blood in freedom's cause,
A spirit to his *rocks* akin,
The eye of the hawk and the fire therein.

COLERIDGE.

Auf einmål seh' ich Rath
Und schreibe getrost: im Anfang war die That.

GOETHE.

CHAPTER I.

PRUSSIA AND RUSSIA REUNITED.

THE fall of Napoleon seems at first sight to follow naturally and inevitably on the Russian disaster. If the throne of Augustus was shaken in his old age by the loss of three legions, it may be thought a matter of course that Napoleon's would be overthrown by the loss of half a million of men. A young dynasty can seldom support military disaster, and such disaster as this, the greatest known to history, might have brought down the oldest dynasty in the world. It came also with every possible aggravation, for it came at the end of a long period of war, when the French nation, like the English at the time of Malplaquet, might be supposed to have grown tired of shedding their blood. Nor could any excuse be offered for it; for if there never was a military expedition so great, there certainly never was one so unreasonable or so unprovoked. By such considerations we may persuade ourselves that the fall of Napoleon was as natural as that of his nephew after Sedan; the rising of the

nations against him, their alliances, and finally their victories and success, may strike us as that which might have been anticipated beforehand and as a mere matter of course.

But we have only to look closer, and we shall find that this view is mistaken. In the first place, the circumstances were so peculiar that the French themselves did not and could not desert Napoleon, as they did his nephew after his defeat, but clung to him more closely than ever. An unparalleled disaster coming on the sudden in the midst of a series of unparalleled successes did not work as even a calamity less signal might have worked, if it had been preceded by a phase of decline or by other slighter misfortunes gradually producing discontent. To desert Napoleon at that moment was indeed impossible to France, for no other Government could be thought of, and he alone could be expected to save the nation in the danger he himself had brought on it. Accordingly no cry of *déchéance* was raised. On the contrary, France made sacrifices for her Emperor in his need, such as she had made for her Revolution in 1793. While Prussia was rousing herself for her *levée en masse*, France, which had just lost half a million of men, enabled Napoleon between January and May to create another army, which outnumbered all that Russia and Prussia could bring against it. But is it true that though France stood firm, yet Napoleon's loss in reputation and resources was such that the other nations, seeing their opportunity, immediately threw off their fear of him and uniting crushed him with the weight of superior force? Nothing of this sort happened within the

limits of what we may call Napoleon's Empire. The Confederation of the Rhine did not dissolve, nor was there even for some time any defection from it. Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Left Bank of the Rhine, remained quiet. What is still more to be noted, Austria did not stir, nor, though no doubt she looked forward to recovering part of what she had lost, had she as yet any thought of taking up a position of hostility towards Napoleon, much less of overthrowing him. The defection of Austria from his cause did not take place till a later time, when all the circumstances were altered. It took place when Napoleon's losses had to all appearance been repaired, when he was again at the head of a force superior to that of his enemies, when he had again taken the offensive, and had proved by new victories that the talisman of success had not been lost with the old army. Thus instead of crumbling away at the first touch of disaster, his empire showed an astonishing stability. A shock, which might have seemed irresistible, passed over it without shaking most of the supports on which it rested. The actual political effects of the Russian catastrophe were two only. First Russia was encouraged to assume the offensive against France; secondly Prussia, which we have watched wavering through so many years between the French and Russian alliance, and which had lately been forced to adopt the former, now takes courage to renounce it, and forms an alliance with Russia. Europe, in fact, is brought back to the state of affairs before the Peace of Tilsit, and a new campaign is fought between the same belligerents that were engaged in the campaign of Eylau and Fried-

land. The French Empire is no doubt somewhat faint from hæmorrhage, but in other respects, through the great enlargement of the Confederation of the Rhine, through the Austrian marriage and the birth of one who represents at once the old Empire and the new, it is a far firmer fabric than it was in 1807.

Again, these results which actually did follow Napoleon's failure in Russia, this combined attack upon the French Empire by Russia and Prussia, ought not to be regarded as inevitable and a mere matter of course. We hear much of Napoleon's vast losses in Russia, but we seldom remark that the Russian loss was equally great. If France might be expected to be exhausted, so might Russia. In such a condition was it a matter of course that she should pursue her enemy beyond her frontier, hunt him through Germany into France, and not rest till she had crushed him? Such an undertaking might at first sight seem even rasher than Napoleon's enterprise against Russia. And what occasion was there for it? Did even revenge call for it? Was it not enough for revenge that almost all the invaders lay buried under the Russian snows? Was it not enough for the honour of Russia that she had given the tyrant such a lesson as never tyrant received before? But if Russia was bent upon obtaining some indemnity for all her sacrifices, why should she seek it from Napoleon himself? What she might take from him could not fall to her. She would be none the better for the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, none the better, but perhaps even the poorer, for the restoration of Prussia to greatness, none the better for the deposition

of Napoleon and the return of the Bourbons. On the other hand, how natural and easy for her to indemnify herself in another way! Among the accomplices of Napoleon appeared Prussia. The army of Prussia had marched under his orders, and his army had been largely provisioned from her territory. It was true that no injury could better deserve forgiveness than one committed under such extreme compulsion. But it would serve for a pretext; Prussia was still nominally an enemy and Napoleon's ally, and she was close at hand while he was far off. What more natural then than for Russia to indemnify herself at Prussia's expense by taking the opportunity of extending her frontier, say to the Weichsel? On the other hand, it was not obviously the interest of Prussia to become the offensive ally of Russia against Napoleon. She had suffered much from Russia at Tilsit and since, and Russia had now risen, first by the help of Napoleon, and then by his defeat, to an immense greatness in Europe. The Russian alliance would be almost as oppressive as Napoleon's, and the country would now be flooded with Cossacks, as in the past year it had been overrun by the French. It was more natural for Prussia to return to her old neutrality between France and Russia, which might now be maintained in a better spirit by the help of the nationality doctrine and by the support of Austria. The natural course was for Prussia and Austria to stand by each other, and try to keep the balance even between the great Western and the great Eastern Power, and at the same time to keep the German territory free from the armies of both.

This is not conjectural. We have positive evidence both of the reluctance of Russia to undertake an offensive war against Napoleon and of her disposition to seize Prussian territory, and of Prussia's disinclination both to war with France and to close alliance with Russia. It is particularly to be noted that Napoleon himself continued to count upon Prussia as an ally. He thought he could bribe her by restoring some of her greatness, and threw out hints that he was tired of Jerome. Nay, in one of those fits of portentous blindness with respect to popular forces which occasionally visited him, he imagines himself commencing another offensive campaign against Russia, with Saxony supporting his right and Prussia his left. Thus it was not by an easy and unavoidable calculation of interests and of chances that Russia and Prussia were led to form their offensive alliance. This alliance was a great and memorable work concerning which it is reasonable to inquire, Who were its authors, and by what means did they bring it to pass? One of its principal authors then was Stein, and hardly at any time in his life did he work more powerfully or more beneficially. But as he shares with Hardenberg the honour of having regenerated the Prussian institutions, and with Scharnhorst that of having revived the Prussian national spirit, so in this work of reviving the Russian alliance, he has a colleague in one who by a single bold act procured for himself an imperishable name in Prussian history, General Yorck. When we remember what had happened after the battle of Friedland, how irresistibly Russian feeling had declared itself against continuing the war

when no directly Russian interest was at stake, when we observe that the exhaustion of the country was much greater now than then, and that leading men, such as Kutusoff, held now the same language that Bennigsen had held then, we cannot fail to see the importance of the fact that a Prussian statesman of European celebrity, of the largest views and the strongest character, stood beside Alexander. We have seen reason to think that the Czar's firmness after the loss of Moscow was not attributable in any considerable degree to Stein's influence, but chiefly to the commanding force of public opinion. The same explanation cannot be given of Alexander's second great resolve, which certainly public opinion did not dictate. Let us now inquire what advice on the subject he received from Stein.

A Memoir, written by Stein at St Petersburg, November 5, 1812, may be given here almost entire. In this second period of his public life it answers to that Representation of the Faulty Organisation of the Cabinet, by which in 1806 he may be said to have commenced the first period. The fierce personal attack he now makes upon Romanzoff answers to that which in the earlier paper he directed against Haugwitz and Lombard.

He begins thus:

The French army in dissolution from hunger, sickness and the sword, Napoleon in flight, covered with shame, racked with fury and the pangs of conscience (on what is this founded?)—such are the successes achieved by the wise and strong measures of the Emperor Alexander, the admirable energy of the Russian people and the valour of the army. What are the immediate consequences of these great events?

An alteration in the character of the war and in its arena, and in all the foreign relations and alliances of Russia.

The war will probably become offensive instead of defensive, its arena will be transferred beyond the frontier; it will therefore no longer be waged in wild, half-cultivated districts, and it will have to be conducted by the military force alone, without the help of an armed population; it must therefore be conducted more scientifically, with more economy as to means, and with careful consideration of the spirit of the nationalities which are to be roused to activity. We can no longer reckon on deserts, devastations, masses and the force of physical conditions alone; we shall have to fight for our ground, husband our resources, gain influence over the inhabitants; we need insight, energy, humanity and liberal notions in the generals; we need discipline in the soldiers.

We see that he assumes at once as about to happen what actually did happen, yet what was opposed by a large party about the Czar, and was not at this time contemplated or wished at the Prussian court, an advance of the Russians into Germany. But what are they to do in Germany?

Since the war is passing into Germany we must lay down general principles as to the attitude to be assumed towards the Princes and the inhabitants. The general principle will be: to spare the inhabitants, to set them in action against the common enemy, but as to the Governments to watch and direct them, and in certain cases to establish a dominion over them. We must declare our settled purpose of restoring the independence of Germany, of annihilating the Confederation of the Rhine, and we must invite all Germans to join the allied armies, in order to conquer their liberties; we must cause the Russian army to be accompanied, at the moment of its entrance into Germany, by men who have remained faithful to the cause of their Fatherland, as well as by the German Legion, which must receive a wider extension through the population of the territory now to be occupied. The Princes who adhere to the common cause must then guarantee the sincerity and solidity of their views by sur-

rounding themselves exclusively with well-disposed men, and committing their forces into the hands of their allies, who at the same time will seize possession of and administer the territories of any Princes that may continue devoted to Napoleon. We may hope that Austria and Prussia will remember their true interest as soon as the approach of the Russian armies to their frontiers gives them security and protection against Napoleon's tyranny, and that they will no longer abuse the reputation given them by God for the happiness of their people to the riveting of their fetters. The other German Princes will be less ready to throw off the yoke of their tyrant, fear having taken deeper root in their souls, which have been degraded by oppression and by the consciousness of weakness.

He then goes on to say, that pressure must be put upon the King of Prussia to dismiss the cowardly and contemptible set who strive to humour his unfortunate predisposition to weakness, instead of guarding and supporting him against it, and to compose a ministry of Schön, Scharnhorst and Dohna. We may be a little startled to find Dohna's name mentioned here along with Scharnhorst's. Dohna had indeed been Stein's nominee at the end of 1808, but he had disappointed everybody and certainly Stein as much as others. It is not impossible, as perhaps we shall see in the sequel, that the name stands here only for form's sake, and the Minister whom Stein really intended to place in the Department of the Interior was—himself. He then passes to the other German Princes:

These have no right, whatever may be their behaviour, and whether they resist or submit at once, to demand the maintenance or restoration of their sovereignty; they are at present in the position of enemies, and at the moment of the entrance of the allied armies, the Princes commanding them can use their right of conquest as their own interest may dictate. Even the expelled

Princes have no right to demand their restoration, since it lies exclusively with the allied Princes to decide what use they will make of their successes when they have driven the French out of Germany; for they are by no means the allies of those Princes and have given them no guarantee.

He goes on to quote 'Mr Paisley's excellent Essay on the Military Policy of the British Empire' in support of this doctrine about the minor Princes.

'As it will not be possible to entrust the execution of a plan like this to a mere Commander-in-chief, it will be necessary,' he proceeds, 'to create at the moment of crossing the frontier a Council, to which the allied courts may commit their administrative and diplomatic affairs.' He refers to several examples of similar Councils which had been formed in recent years.

Such is Stein's plan, of which a large part was speedily realized, though not so quickly as he hoped, while another important part which is plainly hinted at, the abolition of petty sovereignty in Germany to be effected in the abolition of the Confederation of the Rhine, was frustrated by circumstances which will come before us.

He is confident that 'nothing can stop the Russian army in its victorious course, that it will draw Prussia and Austria with it, and strengthened by the resources of both powers, get possession *in this winter* of the military resources of Germany and tear them from the enemy.' But we must depend on England and Austria, and be careful not to rest too much on Sweden. Not before this point does he condescend to recognize that another view of the proper policy for Russia may be taken.

A false and crafty policy or ignorance, may perhaps counsel a defensive war, destructive to the armies that carry it on and the country which will be its arena, and allowing the enemy time to avail himself of all the resources of the West and South of Europe. In that case the contest between Russia and the rest of the Continent would be indefinitely prolonged, and the wide territories which would be its arena be turned into uninhabitable deserts. Such timorous and unsound notions are repugnant to the Emperor Alexander's noble and magnanimous character; he will choose to be the benefactor and pacificator of Europe, as he has been the saviour of his kingdom; he will dictate to his generals the plans they are to execute; he will tell them that it is his will that they lead his armies into the heart of Germany; he will offer his alliance to Austria and Prussia, and it will be accepted with ardour and gratitude; he will demand that England form an army in the region between Elbe, Yssel and Rhine, which may contribute to the execution of these plans, and in cooperation with that Power he will set up a political organisation in Germany, which may restore to the nation its independence and put it in a condition to withstand France and secure Europe against the attempts of the violent and capricious nation that inhabits it.

But one thing remains, namely that the Emperor surround himself with good advisers:

His plans must be carried out by a man of intellect and character. The unsound fantastic mind filled with insipid anecdotes, which are uttered from the corrupt heart of a courtier, must cease to influence the counsels, defeat the resolutions, and reduce to despair the true servants of a Sovereign who has been set by Providence in his happy and splendid position to be a benefactor of the present generation. As to this Minister's successor, one might trust the choice of him to the lot, put ten or twelve names of middling men reputed capable into a vase, shake it, and be sure that the name which came out would be that of a more capable, more respected and more trusted man than the person we would expel, whose character and bearing, well-known and pulled to pieces in Europe, are out of harmony with the views of his august master.

We shall see Stein keeping the plan here announced steadily before him. The other plan which, as we have seen, was preferred at the same time by the politicians of Berlin, the plan namely of rousing all Germany under the combined leadership of Prussia and Austria to maintain its own interests against Russia and France alike, might seem to have its advantages and to be free from the inconvenience of giving Russia a dangerous ascendancy in German affairs; but we do not find Stein discussing it or showing any knowledge of it. He seems at this time to have corresponded with no one connected with the Prussian Government; his Prussian friends all belonged to the party who had resigned office in despair at the beginning of 1812. He regards Prussia precisely as she had been regarded in Europe in 1805, as a Power from which no vigorous action can be expected, and which must be hurried forward against its will, for he has entirely renounced his good opinion of Hardenberg, whom he regards as 'sunk in sensuality and weakness, and enfeebled by age.' We shall very soon see him acting upon this view of the proper way of dealing with Prussia, and that to some purpose.

As to the danger of trusting so much to Russia, he is quite alive to it. He begins indeed at this time to express perfect confidence in the Emperor —'much is to be expected from the noble character of the Emperor in spite of his Court'—'the Emperor has shown by his behaviour that he is capable of perseverance'—such is his uniform language. But he is quite awake to the faults of the Russian character of that time. 'If only,' he writes, 'there

were common sense in Kutusoff's army instead of Russianism!' And again, 'You know the Russians, and especially those I have now in view; what is to be expected from such heads and such characters? Either a complete indolence, or an ill-judged use of the influence they have gained.' He is also awake to the selfish or ambitious views entertained by some of them, nay, by a majority.

The successes of the Russian arms necessarily influence public opinion; this shows itself in different forms. Some hope that after the expulsion of the enemy peace will be concluded and Europe left to her own disturbances; others desire the extension of the Empire, at least to the Weichsel, and an ascendancy in the affairs of the Continent; others again wish to restore in Europe a state of public affairs grounded on justice and the true interests of the nations. As a matter of course this third party is the weakest.

The scheme of a revived Poland in union with Russia he discusses in the most jealous German spirit.

Is a people which consists of noblemen, Jews, and down-trodden serfs, capable of enjoying an intelligent freedom after it has been thoroughly demoralized by an anarchy of two hundred years? But how is the restoration of Poland and its union with Russia related to the broad interest of England, Austria, Germany? The question is easy to answer when we consider that in that case the Weichsel and the Oder almost from Cüstrin would be Russia's boundary, that the most important harbours and river-mouths of the Baltic would come into her possession, that the Polish frontier encircles Hungary, Silesia, Pomerania, Neumark, and threatens the heart of Germany—it is unnecessary to linger on the developement of such ideas and their monstrous consequences.....The idea of the union of Poland is really not that of the majority of the Russians; they despise the Poles and hate them for their fickleness and falseness, but desire the Weichsel for

a frontier. This too would be prejudicial to Austria, England, and Germany, for the reasons above given; East and West Prussia would be lost, a million and a half of Germans would become Russian, Hungary would be encircled as far as the sources of the Weichsel, that is altogether, and Silesia threatened.

If then so much is to be feared from the Russians, how can Stein contemplate letting them loose over Germany? He hopes to hold them in check by giving them Austria and England, but especially England, as coadjutors. Unfortunately, nothing can be done with the ambassador whom England has seen fit to send to St Petersburg, Lord Cathcart, upon whom Stein wreaks his irritation in a manner which will not surprise those who have met with the same personage before in the 'Diaries of Sir George Jackson,' and in the 'Bath Archives.' He is 'a mixture of military pedantry and courtier-like reserve'; he 'reminds one of old Field-Marshal Kalkstein, who locked three doors before asking whether the King had gone from Berlin to Potsdam.' He is a sort of Duke of Oldenburg; 'his morality is respectable, but his anxiousness, his little experience of business, his narrow views, estrange every one from him;.... he impresses no one, and comprehends nothing.' Lord Cathcart being of this character, Stein is driven to address himself principally to Count Münster in London, and we have seen already what a strong difference of opinion he would always encounter here. The Count was anti-Prussian in his feelings, and he was afraid of war conducted on the Spanish or Tirolese principles. Stein, on the other hand, was not afraid, but went forward on his course with full confidence, though by his

nationality doctrine, his hatred of small sovereignties, and his popular system of war, he was setting in motion the Revolution which has since transformed the whole of Central and much of Eastern Europe.

Just at this time he wrote to Count Münster (November 20th) one of the most characteristic passages that ever came from his pen:

I am sorry that your Excellency spies a Prussian in me, and discovers a Hannoverian in yourself. I have but one Fatherland, which is called Germany, and since according to the old constitution I belonged to it alone and to no particular part of it, to it alone, and not to any part of it, I am devoted with my whole heart. To me, in this great moment of transition, the dynasties are completely indifferent; they are mere instruments; my wish is that Germany should become great and strong, that she may recover her independence, her self-government and her nationality, and may assert them in her position between France and Russia; that is the interest of the nation and of all Europe; it cannot be maintained in the routine of old, decayed and rotten forms; this would be like desiring to ground the system of an artificial military frontier on the ruins of the old castles of the knights and the towns fortified with walls and towers, while the ideas of Vauban, Coehorn and Montalembert were rejected.

My confession of faith is unity, and if that is not attainable, then some shift, some transition stage. Put what you will in the place of Prussia, dissolve it, strengthen Austria by Silesia and the Electoral Mark and North Germany, excluding the banished Princes; bring back Bavaria, Würtemberg and Baden to their condition before 1802, and make Austria mistress of Germany,—I wish it, it is good, *if it is practicable;* only cease to think of the old Montagues and Capulets and those ornaments of old knightly halls; if the bloody contest which Germany has maintained with bad fortune for twenty years, and to which it is now challenged again, is to end with a farce, at any rate I would rather have nothing to do with it, but shall return with joy and haste into private life.

The vigour of this declaration provoked Münster to a detailed answer, which is also worth translating:

You say that the dynasties are indifferent to you. They are not so to me. There rules in them a spirit which can be traced through centuries. Read what Johannes Müller says in his *League of Princes* about the Guelfic House: 'May I refer to the glory of the Guelfs, whose unbending heroism has made their name a watchword of freedom?' &c. Even England has never been so free as under the three Georges, and the fourth will bring the same mind to the throne. Compare with that the Prussian cudgel and ram-rod! I honour Frederick the Great, and yet he has caused the ruin of Germany by aggrandising her, and that of his own State by creating a body which could only be kept alive by a great spirit which departed with him. When I showed this passage of your letter to the Regent, he said: If the dynasties are indifferent to Stein, why does not he name us instead of Prussia? I should like to put the same question.

Prussia's power survives only in memory. She may continue between the Weichsel and Elbe as a Power of the second or third rank. Why should not Russia have the Weichsel as a reward for her deeds? why should Prussia receive back the possessions she ceded in former Treaties, only to extend the area of her vexations and to intrigue with France? On the other hand, consider what I have said to your Excellency on the formation of a great State between the Elbe and the Rhine out of possessions left without a master. It was intended to find in this region an indemnity for Norway, but Denmark's want of sense and the opposition of the Germans will, it is to be hoped, prevent that.

Thus we see how a scheme had been prepared for giving to Hannover the precedence in North Germany which had hitherto been enjoyed by Prussia. The only part of this scheme which was ever realised was the raising of Hannover from an Electorate into a Kingdom, which took place at the time of the Congress of Vienna.

Münster goes on to put the case of the small Courts:

Do not leave out of account how much science, culture and well-being have gained by the multiplication of centres in which they are cherished. Where is a country that can be compared with Germany in a scientific point of view? Have not the courts of the German Princes contributed to this? Was not the same division into small States partly the cause in ancient times of the culture and prosperity of Greece? But I will not expatiate further. I have only wished to vindicate myself from having a farce in view if I am opposed in present circumstances to the attempt to unite Germany under one or two rulers.

These two letters are noteworthy as striking the key-note of the political controversy that was to occupy Germany in the next generation. At the same time Münster's remarks bring vividly before us the low estimation in which Prussia was held on the eve of that great effort by which she was to redeem all that she had lost in her period of humiliation.

Such are Stein's views, and it is evident that Alexander acted in accordance with them and in opposition to those of the peace-party. As before we look curiously into the autobiography to find whether Stein believed that in this instance his advice had contributed materially to fix Alexander's decision. There we find the following view of the situation:

The retreat of the French army and its dissolution and destruction, the flight of Napoleon and the complete deliverance of the Empire from the enemy, opened a prospect by energetic prosecution of the war of delivering Germany from the French yoke, and a possibility of the fall of Napoleon. Russia was inspired by her victories, the Emperor was ready for new enterprises. On the other hand the wound which the invasion had inflicted on the

nation and the exertions it had made were very great, its military resources were much diminished, the desire for peace in the minds of Kutusoff and the influential persons besides Romanzoff was manifest.

To procure his dismissal and the prosecution of the war was the problem of the moment. I represented in a memorial to the Emperor, &c. (Here follows an abstract.) He had a conversation with me on the contents of this paper (at the end of November, 1812) and asked me whom I thought he should choose; I answered he knew his own officials, not I, and would choose according to his own wisdom—he declared his resolution to continue the war, and set out for the army in December accompanied by Count Nesselrode.

'Accompanied by Count Nesselrode' here means 'not accompanied by Romanzoff,' so that the Emperor took Stein's advice on both points. It is seldom that Stein approaches so near to a positive assertion that his own personal influence prevailed. And indeed we are obliged either to accept this view or to give Alexander credit for a calm superiority to all about him which he had never shown before. Thus Bernhardi writes:

The Emperor saw further and clearer: his eye had grown more accustomed to great affairs. He, almost alone in the influential circles of Russia, understood that the contest was not to be regarded as ended so long as Napoleon's power was not completely broken, and that it was impossible to supply the necessary resources by recruiting in the interior of Russia—there was neither time nor means for this—that additional resources must be sought in alliances with Prussia and Austria and in calling Germany to arms against Napoleon's tyranny. He saw that Russia's army, in order to gain these alliances which were indispensably necessary, must follow the retreating enemy with a confident victorious bearing, however conscious of weakness one might be.

This view, which I take to be sound, that Alexander's policy was really more defensive than it

seemed, is not clearly expressed in Stein's Memoir, where the necessity of an advance into Germany is not so much discussed as impatiently taken for self-evident. But it was certainly in Stein's mind and was, I dare say, fully developed in his conference with Alexander, for in recapitulating the arguments of the Memoir he says, 'I represented how important it was to deprive Napoleon of the military resources of Germany.'

It is indeed clear that had Alexander followed the counsels of Kutusoff and Romanzoff the campaign of 1813 would have been fought in Russia, and it might well have redressed Napoleon's fortunes.

We need not of course suppose that Alexander would not have thought of these arguments if Stein had been absent; nor is it quite impossible that without Stein's countenance he would have had clearness and firmness enough to maintain them in spite of all opposition. But it is evidently improbable, and we feel as strongly in this instance that Stein's influence is needed to explain the result as we felt in the former instance that it was not needed.

Before Münster's letter last quoted was despatched, the occurrence had happened which indicated what was to be the course of affairs in the new period. It was characteristic of the altered Prussia that the initiative is now seen to have passed from the Government. The people in this great crisis decide very much for themselves, and the utmost now possible to the King is to represent or perhaps a little to anticipate their wishes. The plan which we have seen Stein sketching is suddenly adopted

in an irregular, almost instinctive way, by one whom we have hitherto known only as an opponent of Stein.

Hans David Ludwig Count v. Yorck was the son of one of the heroes of the Seven Years War, in the midst of which he was born, in the year 1759, at Potsdam. He was a Prussian of the Prussians, and had served in the army since his thirteenth year. He was not, like Niebuhr and Humboldt, troubled with too much learning, but used to complain of 'those d—d *mirs* and *michs*'; 'in writing,' he said, 'it did not matter so much, for you just made a dash which any one could interpret as he chose, but in speaking you were obliged to say one or the other.' He had been inured to all the hardships of Frederick's military system, had been obliged, even as lieutenant, to live on thirty thalers a month, and used to say, that when a subaltern was hungry he must read his commission and nourish himself on the phrase, that he 'enjoys all the prerogatives of his class.' In the wars of Frederick William II. his lot had taken him, like Gneisenau, to Poland, and he had distinguished himself in the struggle with Kosciusko's insurrection. In the war of 1806 he was attached to the corps of the Duke of Weimar, and so was not present at the decisive battles with which the campaign opened. He afterwards accompanied Blücher in his march northward, commanding the rearguard, and distinguished himself in an affair at Altenzaun. At Lübeck he was wounded and taken prisoner, and then in January 1807 dismissed on parole. When Rüchel, along with Hardenberg, was forced by Napoleon to retire, Yorck

succeeded him in the command of the troops in and round Memel, and came at this time under the personal notice of the King and Queen. They expressed their intention of giving him the superintendence of the education of the Crown Prince. The letter in which from a sense of insufficiency he declined the offer explains how it was that without any very extraordinary achievements he attracted notice everywhere, and has left behind a lively tradition of himself in the Prussian army. It reveals a soldier-philosopher, who can put into words, as it were, the theory of the Prussian military monarchy. In August, that is just after the Peace of Tilsit, we find him at Elbing negotiating with Soult about the execution of Kalkreuth's Military Convention. He writes,

My first attempt at diplomacy will turn out very badly, for where everything is determined by force, it is idle to talk of reasons or laws of justice and equity. My good Major, how unfortunate we are! It is not a year since we stood in undiminished pride on the great stage with the balance of Europe in our hands, and to-day we are supplicating for the fulfilment of a Treaty which an insolent victor scornfully spurns with his foot; and yet who can see at this day the end of the calamity that has visited us? Our condition is really desperate. The French army is still stationed on the Passarge and squeezes the last drop of life-blood out of the people. Every day brings new exactions and new unheard-of oppression. ... Personally they are very civil, but officially I have to swallow things which cause me violent spasms in the fist. However, it is not all gold that glitters with them; only they have unbounded good fortune on their side, and a good powerful head at the top, which besides there is nothing on our side to match.

We have seen what Yorck thought of Stein and his reforms. Stein's fall calls from him only the

following comment. 'Our foreign relations begin to be more favourable, and internal affairs too begin to be more rationally conducted. One silly head is already trampled on; the rest of the viper's brood will soon perish in its own venom'! Yet he seems to have had no inclination to the French party; for resistance to Napoleon when the proper time should come, for vindication of Prussian honour he was as eager as any, but the ideas of the war-party of 1808 and of the founders of the Tugendbund were his aversion. He cared nothing for Germany and would only know of Prussia; besides this he professed a repugnance for every kind of enthusiasm, unless it were enthusiasm for duty. 'Every young Ensign now,' he said, 'wants to play the Marquis Posa to his superior officers.' With these feelings he could scarcely be more exactly in his place than at the head of the Prussian contingent which marched with Napoleon to Russia, for in no position could duty be more completely independent of enthusiasm. As we have seen, he was at the beginning second in command to Grawert, a blind admirer of Napoleon, and in this position maintained his peculiar individuality, holding the French party at a distance on the one side, while he continued to pour out invectives upon the patriotic party on the other. He writes, 'The first part of the campaign of 1812 was very trying to me, my commanding officer had enthusiastic views about public affairs quite different from mine.' On the other hand, he sets no bound to his hatred and contempt for those Prussians who from patriotic motives joined the Russian army, and tried to seduce their countrymen into desertion.

The Prussian contingent was attached to the *corps d'armée* commanded by Macdonald, which remained in Courland while the bulk of the army made the march to Moscow. When calamity began to overtake Napoleon, Macdonald began to feel the inconvenience which arose from Yorck's stiff resistance to French influence, and in November he made a series of attempts to induce him by studied injustice and insult to resign his command. Meanwhile the Marquis Paulucci became, in the middle of that month, Governor of Riga for the Russians, and immediately addressed an appeal to Yorck. It declared Napoleon to be near his fall, and that in consequence Prussia was now in a position to become the arbiter of the destiny of Europe, and Yorck himself to become the liberator of his country. He might either join the Russians and take Macdonald prisoner, or he might withdraw his troops across the Memel to protect the Prussian frontier, and cease to receive orders from the French. It fell to him to play the glorious part of the immortal Romana. In reply (Nov. 20th) Yorck begs the Marquis to be convinced that 'he neither knows nor can know any interest but that of his King and country, but begs leave to observe that a man of experience should never put that sacred interest to hazard by independent or premature action, and adds that the 'precedent of Romana is not applicable, since he knew definitely what his country had to expect from the ally whom he joined—the matter was decided and declared—still his exploit would always be the perfect example of loyalty, secrecy, and foresight on both sides.' In other words, whatever we

may think of Napoleon we cannot join Russia until we know whether she is a friend or an enemy to Prussia.

At this time all that Yorck knew was that Napoleon's enterprise had failed. It was not till December 8th that he learned by a messenger from Wilna that the Grand Army had ceased to exist. This fact, joined to the other fact, which was certain from the nature of the campaign, that the Russian armies must be almost annihilated, completely altered his position. Commanding some 18,000 Prussian troops in excellent condition, he was really in a manner the arbiter of the situation. If he joined the Russians he would not come as a beggar, for it was in his power either to complete Napoleon's defeat or on the other hand to check the Russians in their victorious career. Meanwhile he had sent Major Seydlitz on the 5th to Berlin for instructions. Seydlitz reached Berlin about the 15th, when to all appearance the King had not yet received full information of the catastrophe. We have seen how, and for what reasons, the Prussian court did not by any means jump at the plan of renewing the Russian alliance, and also how strangely Napoleon counted upon Frederick William's fidelity. Napoleon had written to the King from Dresden, 'While I beg your Majesty at this moment to augment your troops, I give you to understand how great is my confidence in your perseverance in the system you have adopted. I have had reason to be contented through the whole campaign with the behaviour of your troops.' He begged the King to establish a cordon in Silesia against the Russian invasion, and

intimated that he intended to name Yorck a Marshal of the Empire. In these circumstances it seems unlikely that Seydlitz received definite instructions for his chief to desert the French cause, if he even carried any message encouraging him to take such a course,—the story is that the King bade Yorck act 'according to circumstances.' When Seydlitz returned he found matters much altered at the camp. Yorck was now at Tauroggen, some miles from Tilsit, and Macdonald himself was in Tilsit, quartered, it is said, in the same house which Napoleon had occupied in his days of triumph in 1807. The two armies had been separated during their retreat out of Courland, and Russians were now before and behind them. As early as the 18th Macdonald had said to a messenger who told him of Cossacks met here and Cossacks seen there, 'Enfin vous me direz que se trouvent des cosaques au bois de Boulogne!' But the greatest alteration had taken place in Yorck's mind; it had been caused by a missive from Paulucci, which had been brought by Count Friedrich Dohna (son-in-law of Scharnhorst) on the morning of the 26th. Paulucci had enclosed a letter from the Czar containing the following passage, 'It is possible that General Yorck might express a wish, on the return of his courier from Berlin, to learn my views in respect to the advantages the King of Prussia would reap from deciding to make common cause with me. In this case you are to answer him that I am inclined to make a Treaty with that Prince in which it would be arranged, and I would take the engagement to him, not to lay down my arms until I had succeeded in procuring for Prussia

an aggrandisement of territory such as to enable her to resume the place among the Powers of Europe which she had before the war of 1806.' It will be seen that this assurance precisely met the difficulty which Yorck had pointed out in his earlier letter to Paulucci, namely, that he did not know by any positive declaration 'what his country had to expect from the Russians, if he should join them.' The full importance of the Czar's declaration could not but strike him; and it could not escape him that if the Czar were not received as a friend he would probably become an invading enemy. Friedrich Dohna and Clausewitz would tell him of the strong party among the Russians who were for indemnifying Russia at Prussia's expense, and for advancing the Russian frontier to the Weichsel. The Czar had resisted this party hitherto, but he would have an excuse for giving way, or perhaps it would be impossible for him not to give way, if no step were taken on the Prussian side to meet him. Without the help of Prussia he could not dream of liberating Europe, and in that case he must seek his revenge elsewhere; and where could he find it so easily as by spoiling that ally of Napoleon who might be forgiven for helping him in the time of his imperious pride, but not for standing by him in his well-deserved reverse of fortune?

Such perhaps were the reflexions which led Yorck to sign on Dec. 30th the Convention of Tauroggen, of which the fame resounded through Europe, and which first indicated what were likely to be the consequences of the Russian disaster. It was stipulated that the Prussian army should occupy as neutral

territory the district between Memel, Tilsit, and the Haff, through which however Russian troops were to be allowed to march to Tilsit and from Tilsit to Königsberg, that it should occupy this territory until orders should come from the King; and that if the King should order it to rejoin the French, it should not serve against Russia till the 1st of March. This Convention Yorck signed on his own responsibility, although by doing so he evidently, in the existing state of public feeling, took the foreign policy of the country out of the hand of the King's Government; for how was it possible for the King, however he might wish it, to undo such an act once done? No wonder therefore that when his officers poured forth their enthusiasm Yorck, made perhaps all the more anxious on account of this very enthusiasm, was heard to exclaim, 'It is all very well for you to talk, young people, but my old head feels loose upon my shoulders.'

The effect of this act was of course all the greater, because Yorck had shown so much antipathy to the patriotic party, and had pushed to an extreme the duty of military subordination. No one is half so effective in innovation, when he sets his hand to it, as the strong Conservative. In the letter to the King, which he wrote immediately after signing the Convention, he gives purely military reasons for doing so: 'Firmly convinced that the dissolution of the whole corps, and the loss of its whole artillery and baggage, would have been as inevitable, had I marched further, as it was in the Grand Army, I considered that, as your Majesty's subject, I was bound henceforth to think only of your Majesty's

interest, and no longer of that of your ally, for whom the corps would have been simply sacrificed, without being able to render him any more real help in his situation.' But a few days after, writing from Tilsit on January 3rd, he uses language which was very new to him and is hardly to be distinguished from that of Stein's party. 'Your Majesty knows me as a quiet cold person who does not concern himself with politics. As long as everything went on in its usual course, every faithful servant had to follow the circumstances of the time; that was his duty. But the circumstances of the time have brought about a completely new situation, and it is equally a duty to make use of this situation, which will not return. I speak here the language of an old and faithful servant; *this language is that of almost the whole nation.* Your Majesty's declaration will give new life and *enthusiasm* to us all; we shall all fight like genuine old Prussians, and your Majesty's throne will be established firmly and unshakably for the future.' Thus enthusiasm is to be called in as well as duty, and the King's prosperity is to be secured by his following the wishes of his people.

Stein's great power of innovation also grew out of the deep roots which connected him with the past; the difference was that he went back, not merely to the Prussian past of Frederick the Great, but to the German past of the other great Fredericks of the line of Hohenstaufen. He now hastens up to give one of those rude and powerful shocks of which he possessed the secret. He left St Petersburg on the evening of January 5th, his carriage, as

Arndt describes it, placed on a sledge, Arndt himself by his side, two servants in front, an Imperial Chasseur riding in front and another behind, all the bells of St Petersburg ringing for evening prayers as they left the city behind them. A sad scene awaited them at Pskov where they halted on the evening of the 6th. It was one of the centres of the German Legion, and here lay Count Chasot, its commander and one of the most zealous of the patriotic party, dying of hospital fever. He was already unconscious, and the party, when they were admitted to see him, were warned to avoid taking his breath. Arndt took his hand, but Stein bade him farewell with a kiss on the forehead, as it were in the name of Germany. On they drove, coming soon out upon the road, along which the French retreat had passed. The sledge passed now and again over corpses; corpses of men and horses were strewn on the right hand and on the left; the cottages they passed had lost roofs and windows, or had been burnt. One of the two servants sitting in front had to be taken out of the sledge and marched between Arndt and the other servant, to prevent his becoming unconscious from the cold, and Arndt thought it highly characteristic of Stein, that he insisted upon getting out to help in spite of the doctor and his gout. Wilna was reached on the 11th; here they put up at a hotel in which all the furniture had been knocked to pieces, and in the courtyard of a monastery close by they saw a sort of pyramid of corpses as high as the third story and frozen together. From Wilna Stein writes to his wife: 'We see nothing but waggons full of corpses, which are

found on the high road partly eaten by wolves, or are carried out of the hospitals (in Wilna alone there are 15000 in the hospitals), or gangs of prisoners in rags, hollow-eyed, with blue-grey skin, awaiting death in sullen silence. These wretches scatter pestilence wherever they come.'

From the time of their stay in Wilna Arndt gives an anecdote.

A German officer is announced to visit Stein, and a fine-looking man in the uniform of a French officer of cuirassiers enters. He introduces himself as the son of an official, v. Mosel, in Cleve, the neighbourhood so well known to Stein. Stein recognizes the name at once,—'Your father was a fine fellow; pray sit down'—and offers him a cup of chocolate. Then the visitor explains his business. He had been a lieutenant in a Prussian regiment, which had been disbanded after the disasters of 1806. Tired of inaction, when the Spanish war broke out he had applied for a commission and had made some campaigns in Spain, till his regiment had been ordered into Poland and then led into Russia. He went on with his story without noticing the changed expression of Stein's face, until he concluded by saying, with a deep bow, 'I and my unfortunate comrades have heard with pleasure that your Excellency is come to Russia to look after the unfortunate Germans. A lot of us are prisoners here, and we are dying miserably of hunger, ill-treatment and filth. We hope your Excellency will take pity on us.' Stein broke out: 'Yes, Sir, I should be glad to help Germans, all Germans in distress, but I am not come here to help Germans

of quality who offer themselves voluntarily for pastime to help a tyrant to plunder and subdue a gallant and free people. Begone: men take very different roads in this world, but our roads are as different as possible, for mine leads to Germany and yours to Siberia!' The handsome cuirassier went crest-fallen away.

At Wilna Arndt remained for a few days awaiting the arrival of luggage from St Petersburg, while Stein set off for the head-quarters of Kutusoff, where Alexander was then to be found. These were at Suvalki, near the Prussian frontier, where Stein arrived on the next day, the 16th. A delicate and difficult problem was now to be solved. Once more the history brings us to the verge of that Province which by some destiny was the scene of all the struggles of the Prussian Monarchy in that age, the Province of East Prussia. Hither the war had rolled in 1806, soon after the first great defeats had been suffered in Saxon territory. Here had been fought the battles of Eylau and Friedland; here had been concluded the Treaty of Tilsit; here at Memel Frederick William had held his Court, and he had removed it afterwards to the capital of the same Province, to Königsberg. It was in the distress of this Province that the legislation of Stein had had its beginning. And now it was evident that the decisive question of the relations between Prussia and Russia must be decided on the same ground. Yorck himself was by this time at Königsberg, and the advancing Russian troops were in possession of Memel. But the King was now at Berlin, and had received only vague

information about the extent of the French disaster long after the inhabitants of the Province had derived the most certain and vivid knowledge of it from the crowds of frozen fugitives, haunted at every moment by the dread of imaginary Cossacks, who tottered into their towns. Orders came from Berlin, they remarked, which referred to a retreating army, whereas no such army, properly speaking, existed. Again, while hatred of the French and enthusiasm for the Russians were universal in the Province, so that it was almost impossible to restrain the people from giving emphatic expression to both, and while the Russian generals were making their appeals to these feelings and calling the people to arms against Napoleon, the distant King was still Napoleon's ally, still at war with Russia, and Macdonald had actually marched into Tilsit after defeating the Russians by the help of Prussian soldiers, as late as December 26th. It was evident that most serious complications might arise if this ambiguous relation between the two States should be allowed to continue much longer.

After his long solitary drive through the Lithuanian forests Stein must have felt himself on his arrival at Kutusoff's head-quarters plunged rather suddenly into the most burning questions of the day. Kutusoff had just received from Yorck an energetic protest against the proceedings of the Russians at Memel. Paulucci had taken possession of that town at the beginning of the month in the name of the Emperor of all the Russias. He had created a Commandant, Colonel Ekesparre, and an Intendant, Foelkersahm, and these officers had

laid their hands upon the public moneys, levied rates for the Russian government, laid an embargo on the Prussian ships in the harbour, and forbidden the officials of the town to hold any communication with the local Prussian Government at Gumbinnen, the centre of the District. Besides Yorck, the President of the District, who was no other than Schön, had also interfered by sending an official to Ekesparre with a protest against these proceedings, and Stein now received a letter from Schön, acquainting him with the disagreeable affair at Memel and demanding that he would obtain satisfaction from the Czar for the insult done to the King's Government. So at least Schön tells us that he wrote, and he would have us believe that he went so far as to declare that if satisfaction were not given 'he should be forced to raise the country against the Russians.' It is certain at any rate that there reigned in the Province a most dangerous confusion. The King for the French, the people for the Russians, some of the officials against both; and meanwhile the Russian armies already in the Province, and some divisions advanced beyond it to the Weichsel!

In these circumstances then Stein devised and probably draughted the following remarkable document, for which he obtained the signature of the Czar:

We Alexander the First by the Grace of God Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, &c. make known by these presents that, whereas East and West Prussia are in course of occupation by our troops, and are thereby separated from the central point of their Districts since Our relations to His Majesty the King

of Prussia remain still unsettled, We have considered it indispensably necessary to take provisional measures of oversight and guidance, in order to guide the Provincial Authorities and make the resources of the country available in favour of the good cause.

In consequence of this, we have commissioned and do commission by these presents the Baron Heinrich Friedrich Carl vom Stein, Knight of the Order of the Red Eagle, to resort to Königsberg and there to take cognizance of the condition of the country in order to avail himself of its resources in military force and money for the maintenance of our undertakings against the French armies. Furthermore we commission him to see that the revenues of the land occupied be faithfully administered in accordance with the above-mentioned object, that the property of the French and of their allies be sequestrated, and that the arming of the Landwehr and Landsturm be arranged in the shortest possible time according to the plans designed and approved in the year 1808 by His Majesty the King of Prussia, and that the necessary supplies of provision and means of transport for the army follow with order and expedition. For this purpose We give full power to the above-named Baron vom Stein to adopt all means which he may hold necessary for the fulfilment of this commission, to avail himself of the officials who may seem to him the most adapted to carry our purposes into effect, to dismiss those whom he shall hold incompetent or ill-disposed, but to set watch on, and even to cause to be arrested, such as excite suspicion. We confer upon him the right of causing his office to be represented by a man in whom he may confide. His mission will determine at the moment when we shall have effected a definitive arrangement with the King of Prussia. Then shall the administration of the Province be given back to him, and the Baron vom Stein shall return to us. Furthermore we promise by Our Imperial Word to ratify all which shall be decreed and executed in virtue of the present plenary commission. In attestation of this we have signed this our full power and caused it to be sealed with our small seal. Given at Raczki on the 6th (*i. e.* the 18th) of January of the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, in the 13th year of our reign.

L. S. (with his own hand) ALEXANDER.

Stein seems to have said nothing to Arndt about the formidable document he had in his pocket, when the two travellers met again the next day at Lyck, on Prussian ground, Arndt coming from Wilna, Stein with the Emperor through Raczki from Suvalki. In fact it is to be observed that of all the scenes which immediately follow, among the most curious, anxious and important in the history of Prussia, Arndt though present seems to see nothing. He sees indeed the personages, and can describe how they looked, but beyond this he sees only the snow and the misery and the difficulty of getting food. He seems hardly to know what happened in Lyck, for though he remarks that the Emperor Alexander was there, he does not say that he made here his solemn entry, and was received with a gushing speech by the Superintendent Gusevius (called by Schön's friend Schulz 'the reverend young-old Gusevius), and that when the speaker said, 'You come not to destroy but to bless,' the Czar broke in, 'No, I am the friend of your King and the people,' and pressed the old man's hand. On the next day Stein, with the faithful poet by his side, set out upon his mission to Königsberg. The next night they were in Schön's house at Gumbinnen, where, to recruit, I suppose, after so many hardships, they delayed two whole days. Schön and Stein must have had at that moment pressing matters indeed to talk of, but Arndt seems to have heard only ordinary, though animated, conversation. Schön described the flight of the French through his district, how their officers, when they had been

quartered upon the richer inhabitants of the town, were afraid to use their tickets and preferred to pay high for a poor lodging in the house of a tradesman, fearing for their lives from the population they had treated so ill. Schön thought that if he had ordered the trumpets to blow and raised the cry of Kill! Kill! not a Frenchman would have ever seen again the other side of the Weichsel. 'Why did not you do so then?' exclaimed Stein. 'Nay, I do not think you would have done so, angry as you can be upon occasion,' replied Schön. 'I think I should have given orders to blow,' said the other, and the two old friends laughed. This was all that the innocent warm-hearted observer could overhear. On the 21st of January, according to Arndt, the 22nd according to Pertz, Stein re-entered Königsberg, the very town from which he had ruled Prussia as a dictator little more than four years before. This time too he came with very full powers, but strangely enough they were powers from the Czar of Russia.

CHAPTER II.

THE ESTATES OF KÖNIGSBERG.

YORCK's Convention, and Stein's appearance at Königsberg with a Russian Commission to arm the Province against Napoleon, were decisive steps taken towards re-establishing the old alliance of Prussia and Russia, and they were steps taken quite independently of the Prussian King and Government. So far they resemble each other, but when we compare them more closely we shall see, I think, that the spirit of the two acts is very different. Yorck acts as a Prussian subject of the most devoted loyalty, and if he travels beyond the letter of his military duty does so with anguish of heart, and only because he believes that in his exceptional situation he can in no other way perform that duty in the spirit. The army of Prussia had been reduced to a very small force, and the corps which Yorck commanded was therefore of the utmost importance to the State. Yorck's Convention might be represented as saving it from the danger of perishing with the Grand Army. It is true that this mili-

tary justification was not quite sufficient, for Yorck could not make out the danger from the Russians to be serious, and his superior officer Macdonald was able after Yorck's defection to lead home the much smaller force which remained to him. It was not therefore possible altogether to divest Yorck's act of a political character. But then the circumstances were wholly unprecedented; for who could reckon upon the total destruction of so vast an army commanded by the most successful of leaders? Knowing himself to be neither one of Stein's party nor a politician at all, Yorck could not help supposing that what forced itself upon his own mind as the manifest interest of the country would appear such to the Government likewise, and if this should prove the case inaction on his part at that critical moment would be equivalent to a political act, for it would hamper the King's measures in the most serious manner. Macdonald's division, including Yorck's corps, was now the most considerable force left on the military chess-board, and if it should remain decidedly anti-Russian, it might commit Prussia beyond recall to the French alliance. In these circumstances, and receiving at the last moment a message from the King which might be construed as leaving him free, Yorck took an independent decision. Even then he decided as little as he could, for he did not join the Russians, and he left it still open to the King to order him back to his post in the army of France. Thus his act was one which on the theory of military subordination itself intelligently interpreted, might be held justifiable, if not obligatory, and Yorck accompanied

it with abject apologies and almost unnecessary offers to lay 'his old head,' which after all was only fifty-three years old, at his Majesty's feet.

The act of Stein is altogether different. If we take, as we may fairly take, the words of the Full Power as his own words, we see that he does not provisionally, or under the pretext of exceptional circumstances leaving him no choice, take a step which he feels sure the King himself would take if he were on the spot, and take it in such a way that if this should prove to have been a mistake it may be revoked afterwards. On the contrary, he dictates in the most imperious manner what the King's policy is to be. There is 'a good cause' for which the nation is to take up arms, and it is assumed throughout that this policy is to be adopted without reference to the King's approval. No doubt a future arrangement with the King is contemplated, and Stein's commission is to determine as soon as the arrangement is made, but evidently the arrangement contemplated is not any arrangement which the King in the exercise of his free-will may agree to, but merely an arrangement as to the way in which Prussia is to carry on war against France. For before the arrangement is made Stein is to call out the Landwehr and Landsturm, that is, not merely to prepare the means of war, but to create a popular power which would dictate to the King. Such a measure is parallel to the calling out of the Irish Volunteers in 1782, or the creation of the National Guard in France; it is a measure which announces, and is intended to announce, to the King that on this question of national independence

the nation were prepared to go forward, if necessary, without him. We remember that early in 1811, Ompteda suspected that the War Party, which he said 'was in constant communication with the ex-Minister vom Stein,' were disposed 'to carry out their plans, if necessary, in the revolutionary fashion, and overthrow every one who would oppose them.'

But we have also noted in what sense the word 'revolutionary' is here to be understood. If Stein treats the Prussian Monarchy somewhat unceremoniously it is not from any want either of the sense of public duty or of respect for established institutions, for the whole turn of his mind was towards loyalty and piety towards the past, so that Radicals thought him a prejudiced Conservative. But in his view duty to Prussia and to the King of Prussia is secondary to the duty he owes to a larger country and to a more ancient authority, that half-ideal Germany with which his birth connected him. Probably he had grown tired of watching the abject humiliation of the Prussian Court, and the King's last helpless surrender to Napoleon, in March, 1812, was the sort of act which Stein, particularly as he was ill-informed about the details of it, was perhaps not likely to forgive. Meanwhile he had been profoundly impressed with what he had witnessed in Russia. That scene in Moscow, 'elevating, inspiring,' remained impressed upon his mind. Since that he had seen the rising of the Russian people and the mighty overthrow of the tyrant. Why should there not be a Germany as there was a Russia—that is, as we have said above, a State which should not be a mere State, but should be also a nation

and a Church? In this second period of his public life he seems to know only of Germany, and to have almost forgotten Prussia.

What Stein did in Königsberg with his Russian Commission we shall see. There were many who were startled at the confidence he placed in the Czar and in the Russians, and he incurred blame, though perhaps less at the time than after his death. But the one man who could hardly be expected to forgive him for bringing into Prussia such a document was Frederick William. Accordingly we soon meet with marks of the deep offence that had been taken at Court, and though the success of the war and the glorious revival of Prussia in these years covered all by-gones, so that Stein received honours from the Prussian Government after the Peace, yet he remains for the rest of his life at a distance from public affairs in Prussia; he is never more employed in important business by the Government.

There is no difficulty in understanding the view which Stein, having the character he had, took of the exigencies of the crisis, and we should not only understand, but fully approve it, if we found him right in regarding the King's Government as a contemptible set of slaves whom nothing but a kind of force could rouse to action. This view was so far reasonable, that it seems to have been shared by another observer equally clever and equally interested in knowing the truth, viz. Napoleon himself. His letter from Dresden, in which he expresses his full confidence in the King's fidelity, has been quoted. In the same tone writes Murat, now in command of the remains of the Grand Army, on Dec. 29th,

to announce to the King Macdonald's safe arrival in Tilsit. On Jan. 7th, Narbonne suggested to Hardenberg, evidently acting by instruction, that nothing would serve so much to consolidate the alliance of France and Prussia as the marriage of the Crown Prince with a Beauharnais, or with one of Murat's daughters! Of course a rude shock was given to this excessive confidence by the news of the Convention of Tauroggen, which was brought to St Marsan by a courier while he was dining with Hardenberg on Jan. 4th. Napoleon in particular was profoundly impressed by the occurrence. He made it the ground of a demand for a Senatus Consulte which authorised the calling out of 350,000 men (Jan. 12th), and three days after he enlarged upon it in a conversation with Krusemarck. 'It was a great political event.... It was the worst occurrence that could happen!' He went on to betray that he had in his view at that moment all that actually followed. 'If the Emperor Alexander,' he said, 'does not rest content with the successes he has had, if he crosses the Weichsel, he will make the same mistake that I made in the last campaign. I believe he will make it, since I have heard that he has named *that Stein* and Rostopchin Ministers, and listens to their suggestions.' When Napoleon mentions Stein we always seem to see his lips suddenly tighten, and we notice in his language that kind of forced forbearance which it is natural to use in speaking of a mortal enemy. But this flash of insight soon passed away, and left Napoleon as usual blind to the popular forces and alive only to the personal weakness of Frederick William,

upon which indeed he had counted for ten or twelve years and had never yet found it fail him. A week later he is writing to Eugene, who has just succeeded Murat, that the King must furnish more troops, particularly cavalry, that Prussia is to support his left flank and the Saxons at Glogau his right. He hopes to cross the Niemen again in August. Again, on the 29th, he says to Prince Hatzfeld (who had just been sent from Berlin, and was perhaps the most complete representative of the French party in Prussia), that there must be the closest union between himself and the King, that Europe must be convinced that intrigues avail nothing against this alliance and that momentary successes of the enemy cannot shake the firmness of his allies. Accordingly the King must not do this and must not do that—and we see that he is still thinking of Frederick William as a slave from whom no resistance and even no indignation is to be expected. On the 3rd of February we find him complaining impatiently that 'Prussia does nothing when she ought to be joining us in defending her territory against the Russians and atoning for the treason of Yorck. There are 2000 horse who shut themselves up in the fortresses of Silesia as if they were afraid of us instead of helping us to protect their country!' Does Napoleon, we ask in perplexity, suppose that the Prussians and the King of Prussia are not human beings; does he think that they have no memory for wrongs and no desire to be free, or that they cannot calculate how much less formidable he has become since he threw away his whole invincible army? If Napoleon was so blinded, he had the excuse that he had

studied human nature as it showed itself in the Confederation of the Rhine and in Dalberg, or in Haugwitz and Lombard and Kalkreuth.

Stein then was fully kept in countenance by Napoleon in his contempt for the Prussian Government. Moreover what he learned of the recent proceedings of that Government when he arrived in Königsberg was not calculated to make him change his opinion. The Convention of Tauroggen had been followed, not indeed, as had been expected, by the capture of Macdonald with all the forces remaining to him, and perhaps also of all the remaining French troops in the province, if not also by the capture of Danzig; this had not happened because the Russian force was really much less strong than was supposed; but it had been followed by the evacuation of Königsberg by the French. Yorck had entered Königsberg, where he had been welcomed on January 9th with a great demonstration from the students of the University, their spokesman being one Hans Auerswald, whose murder in the Frankfurt riots of 1848 many of us remember. On the next day news arrived in the town that the King had refused to ratify the Convention and had sent an officer to arrest Yorck, but that this officer, Natzmer, had been stopped by the Russians. This was a great discouragement for Yorck, but the announcement was not official, and on the 11th Kleist, his second in command, whom he had sent to the Czar at Wilna, returned with the most flattering messages and promises. Yorck accordingly, as Kleist refused to take the command in his stead, took courage to retain his post in spite of the King's decision. On

the 13th he wrote his determination to regard the King as acting under constraint. 'Our enemy only gains time by our delay; we lose it; every moment for us is an irrevocable loss. With bleeding heart I burst the bond of obedience and wage war on my own account. The army wants war with France, the people wants it, and so does the King, but the King has no free will. The army must make his will free. I will shortly be at Berlin and on the Elbe with 50,000 men. There I will say to the King: Here, Sire, is your army, and here is my old head; I will willingly lay it at the King's feet, but Yorck refuses to be judged and condemned by a Murat.'

This was Yorck's position when Stein arrived. He was still in command of the corps, and in virtue of a commission received from Berlin just before the signing of the Convention he had a general control over the affairs of the Province. But two days after Stein's arrival came the Berlin newspapers of the 19th, containing the text of the King's orders which were to have been brought by Natzmer. 'The King has felt the deepest displeasure on receiving the unexpected intelligence of the capitulation of Yorck's corps, and faithfully observing his engagements to France, not only does not ratify the Convention, but also forthwith decrees (1) that the Command of the Prussian troops be immediately taken from General Yorck and given to General Kleist; (2) that General Yorck be immediately arrested and brought before a Court Martial; (3) that General Massenbach, who had given his adhesion to the capitulation, be also suspended and brought to

account; lastly (4) that the troops themselves, in accordance with the Treaty concluded with France, remain at the sole disposition of the Emperor Napoleon or his deputy the King of Naples.' 'His Majesty,' so the announcement concluded, 'has been deeply grieved that a *corps d'armée* which has given throughout the campaign so many proofs of tried valour and fidelity has been rendered inactive at so decisive a moment. His Majesty has sent the Prince v. Hatzfeld to Paris, to lay before his august ally the necessary explanations in respect to this unexpected and most painful occurrence.'

Frederick William again! Such probably was Stein's reflexion, and such is likely to be that of the reader who has followed the long series of that King's concessions from the time of the War of the Second Coalition. And yet in this instance it does not seem that the reflexion is just. The position of the King at the moment when this order was issued was really one of extreme difficulty. To have ratified the Convention would have been, so it was certain from the language held by St Marsan, to have broken with France, and whatever the King's ultimate intentions might be he could scarcely do this at once. Around him at Berlin there were 12,000 French troops, and not 2,000 Prussian troops to withstand them. In the fortresses of the Weichsel, Oder and Elbe were 70,000 French troops, and out of the ruins of the Grand Army, from the Poles and Saxons, it was possible to bring together many thousands more, while to this force the Prussians had as yet nothing to oppose. Thus the King was really, as Yorck had said, under constraint. The fact seems

to be that Hardenberg was still carrying on the system which he had all along regarded as necessary, and which had deceived Napoleon and Stein equally, the system of ostensible French policy and French Ministers with patriotic plans and patriotic Ministers behind them. It seems that there was no thought at Berlin of tame submission to the demands of the French alliance; no one there doubted that the time for action of some sort was arrived, and Stein had no need to fear a repetition of the errors of 1803 or 1805. Its present obsequiousness to France the Government would throw off as soon as the King could feel safe from personal violence and secure of honest help from the Czar. When these points were secured their policy would cease to be tame, though it would not be so daring as that which Stein recommended. They would not, if they could help it, throw themselves into the arms of Russia; they would prefer the Austrian alliance if that could be obtained. They did not expect so much as Stein did. A war on the Rhine the King thought (Dec. 28th, 1812) was a chimera; '300,000 Frenchmen must be killed before it could be realised;' and here he proved not far wrong. He even thought that it would be safest to wait and see what Napoleon meant to do next, and if he took the offensive in the spring, not to stir till he crossed the Memel. But against this proposal, which would allow Napoleon time to assemble a new army, Hardenberg strongly protested.

Thus Stein did in reality some injustice to the King and great injustice to Hardenberg. At the same time he reasoned fairly on the evidence before

him, which showed the people and the army zealous to vindicate the national independence, and only a pusillanimous Government holding them back. The view he had formed at a distance, which had led him to provide himself with full powers from the Czar, was only confirmed by what he heard at Königsberg of the cancelling of the Convention. We shall be prepared, therefore, to find that he does not allow his Russian Commission to remain a dead letter. The obvious objection to using it could not escape him. He must have considered what people would say—that he was a traitor to Germany, that he had been bought by Russia, &c., and he must have made up his mind to brave all this outcry. On the whole he had a right to count upon his personal reputation. People were somewhat scandalised at what he did and said, and in the next age, when public opinion had set against Russia, his conduct seemed still more questionable, but few have ever seriously believed—though some of his nearest friends professed to be among them—that the one public man with whom German patriotism was a passion, and openness of dealing almost a weakness, had a corrupt understanding with the foreigner. The real danger to the country of the course he was pursuing he no doubt expected to avoid by the first step he was to take in that course; the danger of Russian conquest would be over as soon as the Landwehr and Landsturm were called out and the province stood in arms. He had another security in the method he intended to adopt for calling the popular army into existence, for he meant to do it by means of an Assembly of Estates, so that popular war and popular

government should go hand in hand and together guard the country against Russian encroachment.

It so happened that the province of East Prussia was particularly well suited to become the subject of an experiment of this kind, and no one knew this better than Stein, under whose notice the affairs of the East Prussian Estates had come in 1808. The ancient Assemblies of Estates had fallen more or less into disuse in all the provinces of Prussia as the absolute monarchy had established itself. In this particular province the Assembly had originally consisted of deputies of three Estates. The first Estate had been composed of the Lords (the four Oberhauptleute and the eight Landräthe), the second of Representatives of the Knightly Proprietors with Deputies of the Cölmers and the Free Persons (two classes of proprietors peculiar to this province), the third of Representatives of the Towns. In the whole reign of Frederick the Great this Assembly only met once, and that was for the ceremony of homage after his accession. But at the beginning of the next reign the representatives showed, by presenting an elaborate plan for the reform of the institution, that they preserved more than was the case in other provinces the remembrance of their former importance. Two years after they received, as it were, a fresh lease of life by the introduction into the province of the Silesian system, above mentioned, of Mortgage Societies. These societies seem to have been regarded in the provinces which had no Estates as an equivalent for them, and where Assemblies of Estates existed, they were adapted in some way, which I can nowhere find

precisely described, to the purposes of the Mortgage Society.

We know how much Stein had hoped during his ministry to create vital representative institutions, and how little he had been able to accomplish in this direction. Yet in one instance a law first planned by him was actually enacted with the co-operation of the Estates. It was that Domestic Law before mentioned, by which the inalienableness of the Domain Lands was abolished. The date of its publication is Nov. 6th, 1809. The Edict is signed for Silesia and West Prussia, which had, properly speaking, no Estates, by representatives of the Mortgage Societies, to which in the case of Silesia are added the names of the representatives of a number of towns. For East Prussia sign their names six members of the Committee of the East Prussian Estates, six persons for Königsberg, four for Memel, two for Bartenstein, two for Tilsit, and two more for the Town Court at Tilsit (Stadt-Gericht). We find that when the attempt was made to raise money upon the Royal Domains, by introducing them into the Mortgage Societies of the different Provinces, the East-Prussian Society, which is spoken of as if it were identical with the Assembly of Estates, was the only one which was willing to meet the wishes of the Government in this respect. We can imagine that when the devastation of the war fell on this province, and the Government was driven in every possible way to associate itself with the people, this particular Assembly would become exceptionally important.

When it met on February 2nd, 1808, that is, in

the middle of Stein's Ministry, we find it assuming sometimes the character of a Mortgage Society (as when it resolved to admit the Domains and at the same time to admit the estates of the Cölmers), and sometimes deliberating as a Representative Assembly, on the debt entailed upon the Province by the war. It also reformed itself by adding to its Committee, which consisted of four members, a fifth to be chosen from the Deputies of the Cölmers. On this occasion it had fallen to Stein to decide that the members should vote according to their own opinion and not according to an instruction of their constituents; in other words that, as in the English system, they should be representatives not delegates. At this time also v. Auerswald, of a distinguished family of the Province, was appointed President of the Assembly, and when at the end of 1808 Stein's reformed administration was in great part introduced, he became Superior President of East Prussia, West Prussia and Lithuania. On his return from Russia Stein found him still at the head of affairs in Königsberg, and in narratives of what now happened he is often called Superior President. This however is not strictly accurate. The change made by Hardenberg in 1810 had for the time abolished the office of Superior President, and v. Auerswald was now President of the East Prussian District and Royal Commissioner for the Estates of East Prussia and Lithuania. Schön at Gumbinnen was now President of Lithuania, and Wissmann at Marienwerder was President of West Prussia.

Already before Stein's arrival the Estates had

shown some life. East Prussian Deputies had met on January 11th, with Field-Marshal Brünneck as President, and had resolved on the following address to the King:

Your Majesty has on various occasions when the internal organisation of the State has been in question, desired to hear the voice of the nation in its deputies, and this grace has assuredly not caused us to forget that it is not seemly for nations to do other than await in silent confidence the disposition of political affairs by their Ruler.

But when political occurrences of an extraordinary nature take place, when we are alarmed lest the foreign army, disappointed in its expectation of finding an ally, should take vengeance on us, or should resolve to leave Germany to its fate, and only try to secure a military frontier for itself, then it seems allowable humbly to entreat Your Majesty to avert the ruin of the renowned Prussian name and in this decisive moment to form the resolution which in our conviction is alone calculated to save us.

We understand well that the execution of it will demand exertion, but we assure your Majesty that no sacrifice can seem too great to save for our children the honour and happiness which we have received from our fathers.

On the very day of his arrival, Stein sent the following application to v. Auerswald.

I request your Excellency, in virtue of the Full Power accorded to me under date Raczky, January 6th, 1813, by his Majesty the Emperor, to summon a General Provincial Assembly for the 5th of February of the current year, in order to deliberate and come to a resolution with the Estates of East Prussia, Lithuania and those situated on this side of the Weichsel, on the creation of a Landsturm and a Landwehr.

Königsberg, Jany. 22d, 1813. STEIN.

To this invitation Auerswald, a man in the main of Stein's way of thinking, responded, overlooking in the extreme need the illegality of summoning the

Assembly without permission from the King, and the less unwillingly because authentic information of the cancelling of the Convention had not then arrived. The summons went forth, but a few days later (Jan. 25th) by an afterthought it was decided, probably in consequence of the bad news which had come in the interim, that the technical name of the Assembly (Landtag) should be avoided, and that it should be called merely a Meeting of Representatives of the Estates, just as in England Parliament when not summoned by the King's Writ has called itself simply a Convention. This meeting was to assemble in order to hear and deliberate upon the communications which the plenipotentiary of the Emperor of Russia was to make.

The moment of Stein's arrival seems to have been critical. Popular feeling ran higher perhaps than ever before in the Province, but for more than a century past there was no precedent for anything being begun by the people. The address of the Committee of Estates given just above may serve as a specimen of the most vigorous language ever used there by the people in speaking to their Government. The local officials on the other hand, though except Yorck most of them were personally well-disposed towards Stein, yet were necessarily Prussian officials, that is, they were drilled in the strictest notions of military obedience, they looked always anxiously for instructions to head-quarters, and they had an instinctive jealousy of any independent action on the part of the people. In these circumstances, critical as the moment was, no one till Stein came had courage enough to begin anything. Yorck had

indeed with immense effort brought himself to make up his mind in one instance, but it was remarked that the effort seemed to have exhausted him and that he was capable of nothing more. 'Yorck is no Atlas,' remarks Schulz, the official sent by Schön to Memel (above, p. 35), and yet Yorck was now the supreme authority in the Province.

Thus for instance a certain Captain v. d. Groeben had formed the plan of a public meeting of persons of local importance, which was to be held on January 24th, the birthday of Frederick the Great, in a public room at Königsberg. He published an address on the subject, breathing nothing but patriotism and loyalty. If the course entered on by Yorck when he concluded his Convention was not to be abandoned again, if public opinion was to be allowed to have influence, and even in some degree to anticipate the Government, it was evident that such meetings, so long as they were loyal, ought to be encouraged, and indeed could scarcely be dispensed with. Yet Yorck demanded the arrest of v. d. Groeben and Auerswald complied; an attempt at the same time was made to hinder the meeting from taking place.

Stein's appearance roused the province from this suicidal torpor. On the day after his arrival he took this affair in hand, and wrote a polite letter to Auerswald, entreating him to allow the meeting to take place:

In this moment of danger and crisis everything turns on fostering and enlivening public spirit, on implicating the interest and activity of many men and citizens in the great concern of the contest of good against evil, in disregarding forms in consideration

of the greatness of the object and of purity of intention; accordingly, I beg your Excellency to put no hindrance in the way of the meeting of the Deputies of the Estates that are here, but to allow it; and I flatter myself that I shall not meet with a refusal from a man of your Excellency's intelligence and feeling.

Auerswald's mind changed at once, and he wrote to the Committee of Estates:

His Excellency Baron vom Stein, Minister of State, having to-day requested me to allow the assembly of certain members of the East-Prussian Estates fixed for to-morrow to take place, I have seen fit on that account to grant permission, but on the express condition that the meeting take place under the oversight and with the co-operation of the Committee of Estates.

And soon afterwards (February 2nd) we find him writing to Hardenberg:

Herr v. d. Groeben, who issued the appeal to the Province mentioned in my report of the 24th, has been released at the intercession of General Count v. Wittgenstein and Baron vom Stein, Minister of State, but remains liable to an examination.

While he arranged this matter to his satisfaction, Stein proceeded without delay to execute the other measures which he had caused to be prescribed to him in the Czar's Commission. Besides providing for the creation of the Landwehr and Landsturm, these were to avail himself of the wealth of the province for military purposes and to sequestrate the property of the French and their allies. On January 26th a decree of the Königsberg Government was posted up at the Bourse, which ran as follows:

By command of His Majesty the Russian Emperor communicated to his Excellency the Royal Commissioner v. Auerswald through his Excellency the Baron vom Stein, Minister of State, the Prussian harbours are hereby opened and the exportation of all Prussian products except rye and oats is hereby permitted.

Another writ of his Excellency the above-mentioned Minister of State contains at the same time the ordinance that the arrangements which have been in force since the Treaty of Tilsit in respect of trade and of the customs on imports be suspended, and his Excellency has herewith also orally declared in particular that this suspension extends to the new duty with which the export of corn and timber by sea was burdened in the year 1811, and for the levying of which a particular Inspection was appointed under date August 7th, 1811. While we give the Inspection to know of this, we charge it to put no hindrance in the way of the exportation of any Prussian product except rye and oats, and to levy no other duties upon them than such as were in use before the introduction of the Continental System.

The exact words of this regulation give us the best possible idea of Stein's position in Königsberg at this time. His decrees are law to the Local Government, even when they are only conveyed by word of mouth, and their validity evidently comes from the Czar's Commission, the Czar's right being technically that of conquest. At the same time that he thus restored the trade of the province by abolishing the Continental System, he fixed on the Duke of Dessau as a member of the Confederation of the Rhine, and sequestrated some estates which he possessed in the province. Schön writes from Gumbinnen to Hardenberg (January 30th):

The Baron vom Stein is plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia in all affairs of the Prussian administration which have reference to the war and the Russian army. In accordance with this he has already, as a military measure, opened the harbours except for rye and oats and suspended the Continental duty, and also placed under sequestration the estates of the Duke of Dessau in this department. He has shown me in reference to this his order and his Full Power, and there was no objection to be made to the military measure[1].

[1] In his Reminiscences (*Aus den Papieren* I. p. 88), he asserts,

Having restored the commerce of the province, Stein might venture to ask it for money. He procured from the merchants of the ports an advance of 500,000 thalers for Yorck's army. At the same time he prevailed on Kutusoff to spare the province some hospital expenses amounting to 60,000 thalers a month, which were henceforth undertaken by the Russian exchequer.

The next important step was to procure the circulation of the Russian paper money within the province. As Stein says, this measure was urgent, since the Russian officer and soldier receiving his pay in paper must be sure of being able to use it in purchases, and, oppressive as it might be if the Russians were really as well as technically conquerors, as a matter of fact their object in the war was the independence of Germany, not their own safety, which as events had proved was beyond attack. A grievance, however, needed to be removed first, namely a prohibition which had been issued against bringing the paper money back into Russia, and Stein had obtained the recall of the prohibition from Count Araktcheieff before leaving Raczki. Nevertheless the Prussian officials made a faint attempt to resist the introduction of the new paper, and concluded their protest with the words: 'In any case we hold ourselves obliged by our official position, especially as His Majesty the Emperor of Russia has been pleased to leave the Prussian Administrative Authorities in the full exercise of their functions, to procure the con-

in direct contradiction to what is here proved under his own hand, that he firmly refused to pay any regard to Stein's Full Power.

sent of the Superior Authorities on this matter.' But Stein persisted, urging the above arguments, and adding, 'I am not in a condition to gratify the wish of one of the King's Governments, and to make the publication of the decree concerning the relation of the Russian to the Prussian currency dependent on the sanction of the Superior Authorities. My decision is grounded on the situation of the Superior Authorities in Prussia, on the pressure of circumstances and the objects of the war. The Prussian Authorities are still subject to French influence; they are not yet capable of an independent or free resolution, and therefore a measure like that under discussion cannot be made dependent on their fettered judgment.' Auerswald gave way at once, and wrote on December 2nd, 'At your Excellency's command of the present date we will immediately comply with your desire expressed yesterday with respect to the circulation of the Russian specie and paper, and this we do not fail to announce to your Excellency.'

Meanwhile the sort of paralysis which had fallen upon Yorck, and through him on the whole Province, by the announcement in the Berlin papers of January 19th, was removed by better news which arrived on January 26th, and which seemed to show that the Government did not intend to behave so pusillanimously as it wished Napoleon to suppose. Major v. Thile brought the intelligence that when he left Berlin, which was on the 21st, the King had been on the point of quitting Potsdam for Breslau (this was understood to be the indispensable preliminary of any attempt to shake off the French influence), but what was still more noticeable, although it was

known at Berlin that Yorck had not really resigned his post to Kleist, yet the messenger had received no instructions on this point and had been expressly charged to deliver his message to Yorck and not to Kleist. The impression which this little circumstance made is indicated by an entry which Auerswald made on that day in his diary: 'Major v. Thile brings the King's sanction to all that Yorck has done and that has happened here.' On the next day Yorck, reassured, inserted a notice in the Königsberg Gazette, in which he announced his intention of continuing to perform the duties of his post on the ground that 'a statement in a newspaper cannot in Prussia be considered official and that no Prussian general had ever received his orders through the newspapers.'

As the day appointed for the meeting of the Estates drew near, the question who should preside over the Assembly became more important. There were three men whose character or position seemed to qualify them for the task. The first was Stein himself. It was at his summons that the Assembly was to meet, and no one had a better right, considering all that he had done and suffered for Prussia, and particularly how much he had at heart to give her representative assemblies, and what reforms he had made in this particular Assembly, to preside over the first Prussian Parliament which was called to do a great work. Moreover, if there was any illegality in the act, he alone was sheltered by his Russian Full Power, and he alone was free from the anxious timidity which paralysed all the others. But we have seen how despotic was the

power which he held as representative of the Czar; it would be a mockery with such power as this to appear in a free Parliament, and the Estates would no more feel themselves free agents in his presence than they could have felt so in the presence of the Czar himself. The official President of the Estates in this province was Auerswald. But Auerswald proclaimed himself ill—as Stein expresses it in his autobiography, 'Herr v. Auerswald, fearing the return of the French, went to bed.' Perhaps it was not so much the return of the French that haunted him as the formidable responsibility of summoning the Estates without instructions from the King, and that not for mere formal business, but to accomplish one of the greatest innovations ever dreamed of in Prussia. Auerswald deputed Brandt, the Director of the Committee of Estates, to take his place, but it would seem that Stein wished the post to be filled by a person of more importance. Accordingly he sent an express to summon Schön from Gumbinnen. Schön hastened to Königsberg, but decided, after an interview with Yorck, that though there was no occasion to prohibit the meeting, as far as the province of Lithuania (his own province) was concerned, from considerations of general police, yet on the other hand he had no call to interfere in the affairs of the Estates, which did not belong to his department. Schön does not seem to have relished the responsibility any more than Auerswald; but as he did not actually shirk a duty belonging to his office, his conduct is not like Auerswald's censured by Stein, who indeed contrasts him with Auerswald in the same sentence, saying that the 'Assembly was ani-

mated with the noblest spirit under the influence of the excellent President v. Schön.' Stein now had recourse to Yorck, to whom on the day before that fixed for the meeting of the Assembly he addressed the following letter:

Königsberg, February 4th, 1813. His Majesty the Emperor has clearly announced his views with respect to Prussia and her King in his proclamation of January 18th; they are restoration of the independence of the State and of the lustre of the throne.

This magnanimous declaration has filled the hearts of all the inhabitants of this country with gratitude and reverence; everywhere His Majesty the Emperor has been received with exulting triumph, and the Russian armies as brothers and liberators, and the ardent wish to fight by their side against the destroyer and his bands of robbers has burst out loudly and universally. Nothing now hinders the fulfilment of this wish. The country is free to the banks of the Spree, the King's person is secure; prudence, honour, patriotism and revenge demand that we lose no time, that we proclaim the national war, that we take arms and exert all our strength to break the fetters of the insolent oppressor and wash out our shame in the blood of his accursed hordes.

His Majesty the Emperor has been pleased by his Full Power conferred on me under date Jan. 18th to commission me to bring about such arming of the people in a constitutional way. The Estates of Lithuania, East Prussia and West Prussia have been summoned for the 5th of this month by his Excellency the Royal Commissioner v. Auerswald; the guidance of their deliberations to a suitable and wise result will come from no one so well as from your Excellency, who by your energetic and wise resolution have hastened the enemy's flight and preserved to the King and country a corps of brave men to fight for freedom and honour; His Majesty the Emperor therefore expects that your Excellency will undertake this guidance and bring the deliberations to a desirable result.

Yorck had at this moment an indefinite sort of authority as Governor General of the Province, and it is of this fact apparently that Stein takes advan-

tage. He also however declines to preside, and at length (possibly after a stormy scene) a compromise was arranged. Stein addressed the following letter to Brandt:

As the representative of his Excellency the Royal Commissioner v. Auerswald at the Conference and Assembly of Estates to be held to-morrow, it will be known to you from my letter to the Royal Commissioner on this subject that I have promoted this Assembly in order to entrust to the deliberation of the Estates the selection of means for the general defence of the Fatherland. I request you to communicate this to the assembled Estates, to direct their offerings and proposals in a constitutional manner, and to lay them before the proper Administrative Authorities.

It was apparently not without a struggle that Stein consented to the Assembly being presided over by an obscure person. He only did so on the understanding that Yorck without presiding should take a prominent part in the proceedings. In a letter dated February 10th, Yorck writes: 'An Assembly was summoned under Russian influence. But in order that this influence might not also affect its deliberations, and so encroach on the King's sovereign rights, I declared to the Russian Commissioner, the Baron vom Stein, that I would withdraw from it altogether if he appeared in the Assembly. Herr vom Stein yielded to my representations, and the affair was conducted under my influence.' It seems clear that Stein did not in the beginning think of presiding personally, but when Auerswald, Schön and Yorck all alike refused to do so he may well have said that rather than allow the meeting to pass without the *éclat* of any distinguished name he would appear himself, trusting that his character as a German patriot would cover his

accidental *rôle* of agent of a foreign conqueror. By this threat he perhaps induced Yorck to make his appearance in the Assembly, and so give it all the *éclat* that was needed.

On the morning of Friday, February 5th, the Estates assembled. Brandt took Auerswald's place as President; on his right sat the seven members of the Committee of Estates, and next to them the Deputies of the Knighthood and of the Cölmers, two of the former and one of the latter from each District; on his left the representatives of the Towns, three for Königsberg, two for Elbing, one apiece for Memel, Graudenz, Marienburg, and one apiece for the country towns of each district. It was a Parliament for East Prussia, Lithuania and West Prussia beyond the Weichsel. The President began by referring to the Commission which Stein had received from the Czar, and then read the letter of Stein to himself. The Assembly resolved unanimously, that 'it started from the principle that its deliberations could only have a just and definite aim if it was guided by that military authority to which both the King's views and the actual wants of the army were known,' and then by way of applying this principle, 'that a deputation be immediately sent to General Yorck to beg him to make his proposals or demands known to the Estates by a written statement.' The Deputation went and soon returned, bringing with it Yorck himself. He said that he came among them as Governor-General of the Province and a faithful subject of the King to appeal to their loyalty and devotion to King and country, and to call upon them to support to the utmost of

their ability his proposals for the arming of the country and the reinforcement of the army. As communication with the King was interrupted, he could only act according to circumstances and in virtue of the authority conferred upon him as Governor-General. He could not state his plans and proposals in detail to so large an assembly; he desired that a Committee should be appointed to consider them, comment on them, and then lay them before the Estates. 'I hope,' he concluded, 'to beat the French wherever I meet them, and if we are too much outnumbered I am sure we shall know how to die with honour.' Loud applause, and cries of Long live Yorck! followed him as he turned to leave the room. He stopped and commanded silence, then said, 'Enough! the field of battle must decide,' and departed.

We are to suppose that this striking descent of Yorck upon the scene had been arranged with Stein, and, as may be expected, Stein was thoroughly satisfied with it, so much so that when he wrote his autobiography he had forgotten all his difficulties about finding a President, and somewhat inaccurately writes, 'I induced him as Governor-General to summon a meeting of the Estates.'

It was in this Assembly that the famous Landwehr of Prussia was brought to the birth, and it was in Königsberg at this time that Arndt wrote his famous Tract, entitled, 'What is the meaning of Landwehr and Landsturm?' by which the new institution was explained to the German public. Stein, having now accomplished the whole of the task which he had imposed upon

himself in his Full Power, sat down to write his report to the Czar, and then left Königsberg on February 7th, returning to the Russian head-quarters, which were then at Plosk. In the Full Power he was indeed directed to return to the Czar as soon as a Treaty should have been concluded between Russia and Prussia, and this had not yet taken place. But on the other hand, there was nothing more for him to do at Königsberg. When the arming of the Province was once begun, and when Yorck had been induced publicly to assume the direction of the work, it was most desirable that all appearance of Russian control should be removed from a movement so pre-eminently national. His stay in Königsberg had lasted little more than a fortnight, and yet how much had been done! We have characterised Stein's legislation of 1807, 1808, as a revolution, but a revolution carried out by the Government itself. Something like a new revolution was now accomplished, but this time not by the Government. What the Government wanted was unknown when Stein arrived in Königsberg, and it was only beginning to be guessed from slight indications when he departed. Frederick William was still in alliance with Napoleon and still at war with Russia. And yet the provinces of East Prussia, Lithuania, and part of West Prussia, were arming, and one of the most distinguished Prussian Generals was declaring his intention of beating the French wherever he found them. Not only was the foreign policy of the State taken out of the King's hand but also the very weightiest matters of legislation. A Parliament was called

without the King's consent, and whereas nothing of importance had been done in Prussia by parliaments since the days of the Great Elector, this parliament was transforming the military system of the country. It is true that all this was covered with the excuse of exceptional circumstances, of interrupted communication, of the King's freedom of action hampered, &c. It is true also that the parliamentary life which now commenced seemed to be quenched again after the Peace. But not the less is this fortnight at Königsberg the time at which the system of political tutelage was first shaken in Prussia, and the nation began to think and act for itself. And what share had Stein in this great change? He did not appear in the Assembly, he departed as soon as it had made a prosperous commencement of its deliberations. What he did I have endeavoured to state with precision, admitting no fact that is not attested by the best evidence. In following this rule I have rejected *in toto* an account which was given by Schön in 1849 and has lately been reprinted in his Remains. Schön has the first qualification of a witness, namely, first-hand knowledge. What he asserts he had the means of knowing. According to him Stein did no good at Königsberg, alienated every one by his irritable temper, and departed only just in time to avoid ruining everything. His only merit consisted in finding out at last that he was in the way, and in the disinterestedness with which, when he found this out, he retired. 'Never,' writes Schön, 'did he seem to me greater than in this moment of resignation.' I have rejected this account, not because it

is less honourable to Stein, but because it is disproved by the clearest contemporary testimony, some of which is furnished by Schön himself. His misrepresentations here are so reckless that Pertz, who never seems to suspect their motive, is startled, and conjectures that the greatness of the event had confused the memories of those who took part in it. And indeed though it is evident that Schön is labouring at once to clear himself from the charge of having tamely submitted to Russian dictation and to secure to his native Province the glory of having originated the Landwehr, yet much must also be attributed to mere lapse of memory. For whereas Yorck, writing immediately after the fact, asserts positively that his main object was to prevent Stein from appearing in the Assembly, Schön describes him as insisting that Stein ought to appear there.

> The conversation (he writes) had at first a quiet tenor, but when Stein demanded that Yorck should open the Assembly of Estates with an address on the object for which they were convened and Yorck refused this on the ground that they had been convened at Stein's desire and an utterance from Stein was universally expected, and when I decidedly agreed with Yorck, Stein's language became so bitter, passionate, and, particularly towards Yorck, so insulting, that Yorck suddenly rose from his chair and left the room without a word.

If we put on one side this narrative, written more than thirty years after the occurrence, and judge Stein's conduct by contemporary testimony we shall see that he probably had a violent quarrel with Auerswald, and perhaps also high words (ending however in a reconciliation) with Yorck. These discords arose from the very natural and excusable

reluctance of the officials to take part in proceedings so unusual; and it must be admitted further that Stein took up a position more extreme than Yorck, not merely in wishing, as we have seen, to hurry the Government along with him, even against its will, but probably in wishing to force the King actually to dismiss his Ministers. He had declared before leaving Russia that this must be done, and the intention perhaps explains a statement which seems well attested, that he required Auerswald to break off all connexion with the Berlin authorities. The event may seem to show him to have been mistaken in the low opinion he had formed of the Berlin Government, but there is no real force in arguments drawn from the event, and, mistaken or not, his opinion was founded on abundant evidence.

But allowing some excess in this matter, and allowing that his language was probably too imperious and cutting—though all that he *wrote* at Königsberg seems to have been studiously polite—I can discover no other error that he committed. And there can be no question of the importance of what he achieved. The Assembly was held at his instance and on the day fixed by him; the great work which it accomplished was the work which he asked it to accomplish. That he retired because he found himself a hindrance seems entirely untrue; he retired because he had done his work.

But his share in this Revolution was strictly limited to giving a powerful impulse. It is strange to think that he did not even see the enthusiastic assembly which he had called into existence. He appears as the incarnation of pure will, and as soon

as he has set in motion all the other forces, thought, speech, contrivance, enthusiasm, he takes his departure. Hence the possibility of leaving his name, as the East-Prussian party try to do, almost entirely out of the story. It is not indeed possible to deny that his initiative led to all that was done, to the first Prussian Parliament and to the Prussian Landwehr. But it is possible to pass this over as a matter of little importance, and to divide the honour of the result between Auerswald who summoned the Estates, Brandt who presided at their first meeting, and Yorck who sanctioned their acts as Governor-General, as if in the absence of Stein they would spontaneously have done much the same. And yet everything proves that no such Assembly would have met, and no such results have followed, but for the strong Will which suddenly left the right hand of Alexander, appeared for a moment at the critical point, delivered one powerful and sufficient impact, and then returned almost unobserved to Alexander's right hand again.

CHAPTER III.

THE TREATY OF KALISCH.

It is now time to inquire what was the conduct of the King and Hardenberg during these critical weeks. We have seen their ostensible French policy which imposed on Napoleon, and we have had a glimpse of the very different feelings they secretly entertained. We have seen their excuse for such dissimulation in the personal danger to which the King was exposed so long as he remained at Potsdam surrounded by French troops. But at the same time we have remarked how mischievous it was as misleading the Prussian people not less than Napoleon, and throwing them back upon themselves in such a way as to make a revolution not impossible. The Government did what it could to guard against this misunderstanding, and it was able pretty early to convey its real intentions at least to the Czar. We remember that Natzmer, whom the King on receiving the news of the Convention sent to supersede and arrest Yorck, *unfortunately* fell into the hands of the Russians, and did not reach his

destination. The misfortune had of course been contrived beforehand, which explains why Hardenberg, when Ompteda remarked to him in what an awkward position the Prussian troops would be placed, surrounded as they were by the Russians, through the King's refusal of the ratification, replied, 'That is the last thing I am anxious about.' In truth Natzmer was sent with a message to the Czar, which was to the effect that the King approved Yorck's Convention, but could not venture formally to ratify it, and that if the Emperor would cause his army to pass the Weichsel and advance to the Oder, the King was ready to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with him. It appears that the plan of an alliance between the two German Powers to resist French and Russian influence alike was already giving way to the force of events. Knesebeck, who started for Vienna on January 4th, had received an addition to his instructions to the effect that the King would be obliged to join the Russians if they crossed the Weichsel, but that he wished not to do so without the permission of Austria. Assurances of friendly feeling now came in from the Czar. On January 18th Boyen brought from him the same assurance that had been conveyed to Yorck through Paulucci. And on the 20th Natzmer was at Potsdam with a most favourable answer to the King's proposal of an offensive and defensive alliance.

It is to be observed that when Stein obtained his Full Power from the Czar, the King's avowal of his true sentiments through Natzmer had already been made. This may account for the assumption which runs through that document that the King intends

to join Russia against France, and may make its tone seem much less imperious. There exists another curious document, which seems to show that Stein's visit to Königsberg was actually approved by the Government, though probably they expected him rather to soothe than to rouse the province. Hardenberg wrote on February 1st a letter to Stein, in that mysterious style which we have seen Schleiermacher adopting in 1808. It professed to be addressed to Mademoiselle Caroline Heinsius at Marienwerder, and ran thus:

Dear Sister, I accidentally learn that Lieutenant v. Werner (the real name of the carrier of the letter) is going into your country. In the uncertainty of the post I avail myself in haste of this opportunity of informing you that our good father (the King) is just about to send on the first safe opportunity the marriage contract to our uncle (the Czar), and as it is to be presumed that he will agree to all the points, our dear Amalia's (Prussia's) marriage will certainly soon take place, and I heartily wish her joy. But do not tell the family there anything about it, for father wants everything to remain secret until uncle has settled everything properly. Meanwhile you can make your arrangement accordingly. Father greets you and adds that he depends upon your managing his affairs there carefully, considering that at the present critical moment they need great attention. I embrace you heartily as your faithful brother, KARL.

This letter would not reach Stein till his work at Königsberg was almost done. It may perhaps express Hardenberg's feeling rather than the King's, and the message from 'father' may be understood as pointing at measures totally unlike the convening of the Estates and the calling out of the Landwehr. The marks of a certain hostility in Stein's mind towards the Prussian Government and of deep offence taken by the Government at his Königs-

berg proceedings are, as will soon be seen, quite unmistakable.

The first open step towards a change of system was the King's departure for Breslau. Suspicious movements of the French troops in Berlin and Potsdam were remarked on the 15th, and again on the 17th; on the latter day Hardenberg was seen to hurry in hot haste, immediately after a great dinner party at his house, in a coach-and-six to Potsdam, where he had an audience of the King, and the same evening the Potsdam garrison turned out, nominally for a military spectacle but provided with ball-cartridges. General alarm spread through the capital; it was believed that some violent attempt was about to be made upon the King's person. On the 19th was the Confirmation of the Crown Prince, afterwards Frederick William IV.; in his confession of faith he said, 'I believe in Him who says to pride, Thus far and no farther!' On the 22nd the King set out for Breslau, 'where,' said Hardenberg to Ompteda, 'he will be quite another man than he is here.' At the same time he anticipated as quite probable that the step would be followed by the seizure of Berlin by the French. Prussia was not only drifting away from France, but also away from Austria, which, as Hardenberg complained, gave only fine phrases and no deeds, and therefore towards Russia.

The next step was to begin arming the population. This step was taken on the general ground that the danger of the time required a larger army, and while it was still uncertain against what enemy the newly-raised troops were to fight. It is, as we

have pointed out, a mistake to suppose that compulsory service was now introduced for the first time. Military service had been compulsory in Prussia and organised on the footing of compulsion ever since the time of Frederick William I. But the old army of Prussia, consisting mainly of serfs and treated with brutal severity, would have been a hell to men of education. Very comprehensive exemptions had been introduced, exemptions including whole towns and districts and producing the effect that the middle class in general was not liable to military service. Now that an unprecedented effort had become necessary the object was to abolish these exemptions, but it was most necessary not to expose the somewhat new and tender patriotism of the educated classes to too rude a trial. Accordingly the exemptions were not immediately abolished, but there appeared at Breslau on February 3rd an Appeal for Volunteers, signed by Hardenberg only and not by the King. It stated that

> The dangerous situation in which the State now stood demanded a speedy augmentation of the existing force, while the finances did not admit of any great expenditure; that the patriotism and faithful loyalty of the people only needed in its thirst for activity to receive a definite direction to an appropriate object, and they would reinforce the ranks of the old defenders of the country and emulate their valour; that with this view the King had decreed the formation of companies of Chasseurs to be attached to the battalions of infantry and regiments of horse, especially in order to draw those classes of the population who were exempt according to the existing military laws and were rich enough to clothe and mount themselves, into the military service in a way suitable to their education, and to give an opportunity of distinction to such young men as by their culture and intelligence were able at once without preliminary drill to render good

service, and would speedily furnish skilful officers, commissioned and non-commissioned.

When such companies of Chasseurs had been formed, into which the more educated class could be admitted, it was possible to take the decisive step, and accordingly on February 9th appeared the Decree which ordained that 'every person between the age of seventeen complete and twenty-four who had hitherto been exempt should be at liberty to enter at his own choice into the companies of Chasseurs attached to the infantry, cavalry or artillery; but that he who within eight days from the publication of that ordinance did not voluntarily announce himself to the local authority, upon whom it devolved to report such announcement to the selected battalion or cavalry regiment, should no longer be at liberty to exercise such choice, and should have his place assigned to him in that part of the army to which the military authorities should see fit to assign him.'

At the very same time the organisation of the Landwehr was proceeding in the Estates at Königsberg. If we put together what was done at Breslau with what was done at Königsberg, we have before us the complete military transformation of Prussia. Frederick's wars were fought with a long-service army of miserable peasants officered by noblemen, and except in this army he had no resource, nor could appeal to any feeling of patriotism in the mass of the educated population. Now there springs into existence a short-service army drawn from the whole population without exemptions, and at the same time a defensive militia to back it. What remained

was only to unite the two forces in one system and to organise the reserve as an intermediate force between them. But it is to be understood that this was not accomplished in a satisfactory way for a very long time, and that in spite of the glories of the War of Liberation Prussia's military system did not attain its present efficiency till it had undergone a new reform in the first years of the present reign.

On February 12th the King issued a general order, in which he said, 'I have been convinced by the justifications and reports delivered to me by Lieutenant-General v. Yorck that he was forced and compelled by circumstances, and particularly by the arrangements of the Marshal Duke of Tarento himself (Macdonald), to the capitulation which he concluded with the Russians. As the strongest proof of my undiminished confidence I have entrusted to General v. Yorck the chief command over all my forces in the provinces of Prussia and Pomerania, and I make this known to the army.'

But still the King remained the ally of Napoleon and at war with Russia. Even as late as February 23rd this situation of the country was recognized in public documents. The Russians therefore, and Stein along with them, do not yet lose their original distrust, not so much of the King's disposition as of his courage and firmness, which had led them to think that it would be necessary to put pressure upon him. Thus Yorck writes to the King on the 13th that a letter from Kutusoff has been handed to him by Wittgenstein, which runs thus: 'It is the pleasure of his Imperial Majesty that the Prussian corps of General Yorck advance

forthwith. You will accordingly deliver to him the order to set out from Elbing and march on your right wing in the direction of Neu-Stettin.' The King sends this to Hardenberg, with the quiet remark, 'The advance of General Yorck proposed by Field-Marshal Kutusoff gives rise to various reflexions. It shows clearly that the intention is to hurry us on (entrainiren) and compromise us *coûte que coûte.*' The Russians are here seen repeating their policy of 1805, and we shall see immediately that some thought Stein was secretly instigating them to do so. It was evidently time for Frederick William to act.

Accordingly on February 9th, that is the day of the Edict abolishing exemptions from military service, Knesebeck was sent to the Russian head-quarters. His instructions were that in concluding a treaty with the Czar he must not engage Prussia to anything so general as the liberation of Europe; that for example the *casus fœderis* was not to extend to Spain or Italy; that with respect to Holland or the Left Bank of the Rhine or Germany in general, all engagements were to be qualified by the clause 'autant que les évènements en fourniront les moyens soit par la voie des négotiations soit par les armes;' that he was to oppose the cession of Norway to Sweden, in order to avoid throwing Denmark into the arms of France; and it was added as the seventh point of the instructions, 'It is of infinite moment that he (the Ambassador) represent to that Prince (the Czar) all the mischief that must result from the almost revolutionary measures which are being taken at Königsberg, and that he take the utmost

pains to engage his Imperial Majesty to give immediately the most distinct orders to the Baron vom Stein to avoid whatever may impair the obedience of subjects to their Sovereign in the Prussian territories occupied by the Russian troops, or tend towards an insurrectionary course of action taken without awaiting an impulse from him.' We see from this passage how much the faint approval of Stein's conduct, which the King had expressed at the beginning of the month, had given place in the next week to alarm and anxiety.

A document[1] which has lately been discovered throws a strong light both upon Stein's complete estrangement from the Prussian Court at this time and upon the eagerness with which he strove to hurry it into war. At the same time it comes opportunely, as we are about to see him pushing his confidence in Alexander to the greatest possible length, to show how fully alive he was to the dangers which might threaten Prussia from the Russian side. It is a letter to Hardenberg written by Stein in Breslau on February 17th, and speaks of the writer as having just returned from an excursion to the neighbourhood of Glogau. Of this excursion nothing was known before. Now as Hardenberg was himself in Breslau at this time and as the letter refers to a very delicate matter, we are surprised to find Stein imparting by letter what would have been so much more naturally conveyed by word of mouth. We are also surprised to find the letter not written with the easy familiarity which is found

[1] Printed in 1876 from the Berlin Archives by Oncken, *Oesterreich und Preussen im Befreiungskriege*, p. 238.

in Stein's other letters to Hardenberg, both earlier and later, but in the ceremonious and apologetic tone of a perfect stranger venturing to address the Chancellor of State. We shall find that in his later visit to Breslau in March, Stein was treated with total neglect by the Court, and in particular that the Chancellor did not visit him. This recently discovered letter shows the estrangement existing at least a month earlier, while Hardenberg's letter, given on p. 74, shows that it had not yet begun on February 1st. Thus we realise the sudden change of feeling towards him which the news of his revolutionary proceedings produced at Court.

But the matter of the letter is also curious. About the same time, on the 15th, Alexander, writing to Frederick William, begged him to send troops to the fortress of Glogau in order to prevent its French garrison from being reinforced by Regnier's corps; he argued that the King might do this without publicly declaring against the French. Frederick William answered by bidding Alexander march himself upon Glogau. Now Stein's letter refers to the very same matter. It argues the advisability of sending Prussian troops to Glogau, but gives a curious reason:

> Every Prussian must wish to see Glogau and the other fortresses of the Oder conquered and occupied by his countrymen and not by the Russians, for pure as are the intentions of the Emperor Alexander yet he is surrounded by ambitious men and is under their influence. They might be attracted by the chance of turning our country to account by occupying these fortresses, as so many nations that have come to the help of other peoples have done before.

Thus Stein too distrusts the Russians. Perhaps, however, it is more important to observe that he arrives at the same conclusion as Alexander, though by another road. Both wish the King to take a military measure which would probably involve a breach with France. It has evidently been agreed between them that he must be hurried into war in spite of himself.

Knesebeck arrived at the Russian head-quarters, which were now at Chlodava, on the 15th. He found the Czar in the act of writing to Frederick William (his letter closes with the words, 'Au moment où je fermerai ma lettre arrive le Colonel Knesebeck, je ne l'ai pas vu encore. Tout à vous de cœur et d'âme'), and received a very favourable impression of his disposition towards Prussia. The Czar now first suggested the arrangement which at the time of the Congress of Vienna was to bring Europe to the verge of a war. 'In the course of the conversation,' writes Knesebeck on the 18th, 'the Emperor Alexander offered me Saxony, saying that Prussia must necessarily be aggrandised. I replied at once that such a proceeding was too much in the style of France, in the style of a conqueror. His Majesty replied that Saxony's conduct made it impossible to treat it otherwise than as a conquered country.' Knesebeck now, however, began to see the difficult position in which, as a representative of Prussia, he stood. The State was in imminent danger of destruction in the moment of changing its system. It had already almost broken with Napoleon, and it was still technically at war with Russia. The Czar, indeed, was full of magnanimous intentions, but if

his magnanimity should not be sufficiently appreciated, there was nothing to prevent him from changing his course and reconciling himself to Napoleon in the manner of Tilsit. In these circumstances was it safe to stand reasoning and chaffering with Alexander? Hardenberg seems to have thought it was not, for he wrote most urgently to Knesebeck, begging him to conclude the Treaty; and it appears from the following extracts from a report of Knesebeck's dated (not despatched) February 25th, that Stein took a similar view:

The Emperor regales me with great promises; Herr vom Stein lets me see plainly that the fate of Prussia does not greatly interest him if only the war in Germany breaks out; this Minister leaves no stone unturned to drive us into it at all hazards. That was the object of the demand that I should give Bülow and Yorck the order to march; it came from Stein and Anstett, and showed me clearly how their intention is to involve us in war with France before we have made a definite arrangement with Russia.... Since I have declined to enter into the plans of these gentlemen they look black at me. It was thought and is still thought at this moment that we have gone too far in opposition to France to avoid signing at any cost, and that Prussia is under a necessity of granting whatever Russia may demand. At the same time they do not mean to demand from us at once the sacrifices they have in mind, but they reserve to themselves the right to impose them upon us later. And so they avoid every positive assurance. I see through their intention, which is to demand the Weichsel for a frontier, and I have no doubt that Saxony is only offered us as an indemnity for East Prussia. When they saw that I was not so compliant in the substance as in the form, Stein and Anstett were openly sent off direct to Breslau to try whether your Excellency (Hardenberg) and His Majesty could not be brought to content themselves with mere promises. Though I am convinced beforehand that this will not be the case, yet I count it my duty earnestly to beg your Excellency to be on your guard and to keep your presence of mind in the critical position in which

you cannot but find yourself. I know the vivacity with which M. de Stein drives things (Je connais la vivacité avec laquelle M. de Stein pousse les choses), and M. d'Anstett is acute and cunning.

There was undoubtedly some reason for the suspicion with which Knesebeck watched the proceedings of the Czar. The Prussian proposals which he had brought, and which the Czar had at first declared satisfactory except in one insignificant point, had been unexpectedly replaced by new stipulations proposed by Russia. How different these new stipulations were may best be seen by putting side by side the Prussian and the Russian draughts of the separate and secret article on which the discussion turned.

The former then is as follows:

It being impossible to establish firmly the complete security and independence of Prussia but by restoring to that Power the substantial strength which it had before the war of 1806, that is by guaranteeing to it all that it possessed and still possesses between the Weichsel and the Elbe, including Danzig, as well as its possessions in Poland and the Duchy of Warsaw, excepting always that part of them which it has already ceded to Russia by the Treaty of Tilsit, His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias solemnly engages to guarantee to Prussia immediately after the signature of the present treaty the above-named provinces, for which, considering the geographical situation of Prussia, there cannot exist an equivalent.

It is then added that with respect to the provinces lost by Prussia on the other side of the Elbe, Prussia is to recover not necessarily the same provinces but a statistical and financial equivalent, it being understood that indemnities were not to be furnished from the ancient possessions of the House

of Hannover. Now in the Russian draught the distinction here taken between the lost possessions in the East and those in the West disappears. Russia undertakes not to lay down her arms

until Prussia shall be restored to a condition statistical and financial corresponding to that which she had at the above-named epoch. For this purpose His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias solemnly promises to devote to the indemnities which the circumstances may demand in the interest of both states and to the aggrandisement of Prussia all acquisitions which may be made through his arms and his negotiations in the northern part of Germany, with the exception of the ancient possessions of the House of Hannover.

In one word, Russia will not give up any part of Poland, but she undertakes to indemnify Prussia out of future conquests for the loss of her former Polish possessions.

Knesebeck was engaged in writing another report when he was interrupted by Nesselrode, who begged him not to send it at once, as the Emperor wished to see him in the course of the day. But when the day had passed and no summons came from the Emperor, he added a bitter sentence: 'I can only see in this a way of gaining time, that the Baron vom Stein may have leisure to lay before your Excellency certain ideas of his sort (quelques idées dans son genre) before I have been able to communicate to you mine; I hasten therefore to send my courier off.' This suspicion was not far wrong. Stein and Anstett had arrived at Breslau on the 25th, and the Treaty was signed on the 27th. In its final form it guaranteed to Prussia not only a 'statistical and financial' but also a 'geographical'

equivalent, and an additional article was introduced 'for greater precision,' in which the Czar expressly guaranteed all her existing possessions, particularly the old Prussian province with a territory adapted to connect it with Silesia.

We have hitherto looked at the matter through the eyes of Knesebeck; the fact that his views seemed perverse to Stein and Hardenberg alike affords a certain presumption that they were wrong. Let us now look through the eyes of Stein:

There appeared (he writes) a plenipotentiary to conclude a treaty, General Knesebeck. This excellent and well-informed man had a disease of doubt that stopped and spoiled all business, a taste for finesse that degenerated into mistiness; the negotiations grew complicated, particularly with respect to Poland. Every day lost was a blow to the great purpose of the war, the liberation of Germany. Everything depended on the swift developement of our military resources, since Napoleon was unceasingly occupied with the formation of new armies. Accordingly the Emperor at my advice sent Anstett as his plenipotentiary and myself to Breslau in order to negotiate here directly, putting the scrupulous General Knesebeck on one side. And here the treaty of alliance was concluded without difficulty, on February 27th, 1814 (1813?), which laid the basis of the restoration of Prussia, and which spoke in the 1st and 2nd secret Articles only in general terms about its eastern frontier, since the Emperor kept ever in his mind the thought of a Kingdom of Poland.

The accession of Prussia to the contest begun by Russia was a daring step, for her own resources were limited and not yet available and the Russian force at that time weak—there were not 40,000 men between the Oder and the Elbe—and on the other side stood Napoleon with all the resources of France, Italy and the Confederation of the Rhine. The resolution of the King and his people will always be pronounced noble; in him it was excellent to comply with the wishes of his people, in them it was heroic to recover their honour and independence with streams of

blood. These views and this enthusiasm were expressed everywhere in the Prussian territory, and under my own eyes at Breslau in the most glorious manner. To be sure these feelings were shared by all the other parts of Germany, but not by its Princes and Cabinets nor by their officers, for these fought with great bitterness under the banner of the foreign Ruler, proud of slavery.

There is a striking frankness about this passage. It shows Stein performing the most apparently unpatriotic act with which he can be charged, and by means the most extreme and unusual. Yet it makes no attempt to disguise the act, or to conceal that Stein forced upon Prussia a treaty which 'only spoke in general terms about its eastern frontier' in place of one which guarded that frontier by particular stipulations, and that in doing so he was fully aware that the Czar had in his mind the thought of a kingdom of Poland. It does not conceal that the arrangement exposed Prussia not only to eventual danger from Russia but to the greatest immediate danger from Napoleon, neither Russia nor Prussia being prepared for a new war. And when Stein describes the unceremonious plan by which Knesebeck was pushed on one side, he, generally so slow to attribute to his own influence any measure of Alexander's, expressly says that in this instance Alexander acted on his advice.

Was Stein wise or unwise in taking this audacious course? From Knesebeck's language one would suppose that he had become a devoted Russian and had no other object than to serve Alexander as effectively as in 1808 he had served Frederick William. It is not necessary to argue against this view. We

are to begin by assuming that Stein believed it better for Prussia to accept the less favourable terms without delay than to incur risk and loss of time by holding out. Now Knesebeck believed, and he has been supported by some recent authorities, that no serious risk would have been incurred, Russia being in urgent need of the Prussian alliance in the critical condition of her armies, which had been incredibly reduced by the campaign of the past year. Yet it is difficult to imagine but that Stein, being so much nearer to the Czar, must have been a better judge of this than Knesebeck, and he would certainly have been not less glad to administer a check to Alexander's Polish schemes. Perhaps Knesebeck overlooked that Russia was not bound to continue her enterprise against France at all, and that his opposition would have had the effect of throwing Alexander into the arms of the Peace Party. Perhaps he did not consider that in the aroused condition of the public mind, and after all that had been said and done at Königsberg, Napoleon's hostility was certain, and the only question was of making a friend at almost any cost of Russia. Perhaps he did not realise the inestimable value of every day gained for action and military preparation.

But I think it evident that Stein's principal anxiety was to commit Frederick William beyond recall. He did not believe in the firmness either of Hardenberg or the King. He certainly did injustice to Hardenberg; but is it so clear that, if a little more delay had been allowed, Frederick William would not have interposed one of those fatal decisions of which Stein had known so many instances?

The circumstances were much the same as in 1805; why should not the King's conduct be the same?

It is indisputable that the want of a more precise understanding with Russia caused great inconveniences in the sequel. But it is equally certain that the arrangement of which Knesebeck made himself the champion, had it been adopted, would have been fatal to Prussia's greatness. It has made the fortune of Prussia that her aggrandisement has been on the German side. Thus it has happened that the more she has grown in territory the more she has improved in sympathy with Germany. But Knesebeck would have turned her into a half-Slavonic Power, unfit, for the same reason that Austria is unfit, to unite Germany.

And thus Stein finds himself once more for a moment at the Prussian Court. How was he received there, fresh as he was from his revolutionary proceedings at Königsberg? Anstett brought a letter from Alexander, which ran: 'To hasten the negotiation, I send you my Councillor of State, Anstett, furnished with full powers. I recommend him to your goodwill, and am persuaded that his arrival will remove the difficulties that still remain. Baron Stein seizes this opportunity of throwing himself at your Majesty's feet. He is assuredly one of the most faithful subjects you possess. He has been near my person for almost a year, and I have thus learned to know and esteem him even better than I did. He knows all my plans and my wishes for Germany and can give precise information about them.' In answer to this the King could hardly say less than he did. 'I have not yet been able to see

Baron Stein, who is confined to his room by illness; but I shall have pleasure in seeing him again and learning from him your Majesty's views about Germany.' It appears from this letter, which was written on the day of the signing of the Treaty, that Stein did not, as used to be believed on the authority of Pertz, induce the King by an urgent personal appeal to accept it. On the contrary, though he saw Hardenberg, it appears that he did not see the King at all. He writes: 'The Chancellor was mistrustful, alarmed for his position lest I should be disposed to make pretensions to return into the King's service. The King was not pleased with the sudden appearance of two persons uninvited from head-quarters and with the rapid unravelling of the business that was the result.' He touches here but instantly quits again a question on which we cannot help speculating. Did Stein want to become Minister again, either as a colleague of Hardenberg or by ousting Hardenberg? He had laid it down that it must be a main object to turn out the King of Prussia's Ministers, and to induce him to take in their place such men as Scharnhorst, Schön, &c. Among those who were to be turned out he had at that time included Hardenberg. Now if the war party of 1808 were to return to office, what more proper than that Stein himself should return at their head? He had earned a sort of right to head the Spanish insurrection which he had so long recommended, now that it was at last to be realised. And he might fairly say to himself that this ambition was most legitimate, for no one could be better adapted for the post than himself. For this, much more than

the legislation of 1808, he seemed to have been born. For this assuredly he was better suited than Hardenberg. He was a less experienced diplomatist, and had less of the tact that smooths the work of government, but he was the only German of the day who had a dash of the Napoleonic qualities that were required to resist Napoleon, fire, rapidity, force and tenacity. He was the man, we may be sure, whom Blücher and Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, had they been consulted, would have desired to see at the head of affairs in the War of Liberation. And furthermore, what more desirable, now that Prussia and Russia were to be close allies, than that a man so well known and so acceptable to Alexander should become Minister? This surely is what the Czar's testimonial above quoted was meant to hint, and it is thus evidently that Hardenberg himself understood it.

But Hardenberg had no mind to quit his post, and was conscious of being equal to it by his courage, capacity, and experience, conscious too of suiting the King far better than Stein, while he was not unfitted also to satisfy the people. The King, who in 1808 had learnt to live not uncomfortably with Stein, was probably much more afraid of him now that he came back consumed by the fire of revengeful patriotism. He was saved the trouble of repulsing him by an accidental circumstance. Almost immediately after his arrival in Breslau Stein was seized with a fever, which he believed he had caught in one of the Polish inns. It seems that he had a difficulty in procuring accommodation in Breslau, and was indebted at last to General v. Lützow, the

famous officer of volunteers, for an attic in the Hotel Zum Zepter. Pertz tells us that he lived here surrounded with jealous spies, Kalkreuth reporting his whereabout to the French ambassador, who set a watch upon him, in order no doubt to detect the revolutionary schemes which he was supposed to meditate. Stein himself notes that when the fever seized him, and he lay at the point of death, the King refrained from taking any notice and did not even send to inquire after his health. But he records gratefully the attentions paid him by Blücher, Scharnhorst and Prince Wilhelm, and adds that he received the most touching proofs of the joy which his return, and later his recovery, caused to the mass of the inhabitants. The news of his illness reached, by a mere accident as it seems, his wife at Prag; she hurried to Breslau with her daughters and found the worst past and the recovery begun. The meeting of the family, which had been separated for a whole year, is the first gleam of better fortune in this gloomy corner of our hero's life. He was not to die alone and neglected in an inn. His great patron was approaching, and when on the 15th Alexander entered Breslau, visited his friend, and talked to the Frau vom Stein of the daughters' likeness to their father (which I think was only true of Henriette), then of course the cloud of unpopularity passed away, and the courtiers saw the propriety of remembering and visiting Stein.

We have arrived at the moment of the opening of the War of Liberation. The declaration of war against France was delivered to St Marsan on March 16th, and the Appeal to my People ap-

peared on the 17th. The French troops had some time before evacuated Berlin. The Duke of Mecklenburg had set the example of defection from the Confederation of the Rhine. The face of affairs had been changed by the restored alliance of Prussia and Russia. Napoleon could no longer expect to cross the Niemen in August. It had become evident that he had mistaken for the third time the nature of popular forces. Prussia was about—slowly indeed, and after a fashion of her own—to follow the example of Spain and Russia.

The King seems to have looked at the war which was about to begin with his usual homely common sense. At last in spite of himself he was committed a second time to a war with Napoleon. The fatality which never left him had overtaken him again. As in 1806, so now, Russia had hurried him away and would desert him after he had borne the brunt of the French attack. The part played by Haugwitz in the summer of 1806 was to be played this time by the hot-headed Stein. His sudden intervention had already forced Prussia into an uncomfortable position. In January the King had brought himself to contemplate war as soon as the Russians should have crossed the Oder, but now war had come upon him when the main bulk of their force was not advanced half so far. Soon the King made another discovery, which no doubt strengthened all his gloomy presentiments. Stein has the following note in his autobiography: 'I returned to Kalisch, whither the King came soon afterwards, and was no little discontented at the small number of the Russian troops that were shown to him; mean-

while'—so he adds with a kind of mischievous triumph—'the die was cast.' In a word, instead of Prussia's force swelling the victorious multitudes of Russia, it appeared that for the present at least the Russian force was insignificant, and that, just as in 1806, before Russia could come up a new campaign of Jena must be fought by Prussia singly. Others received the same impression as the King. Thus writes from Berlin on March 24th one of Jackson's German correspondents: 'I must confess that I am not very sanguine in my expectations. I have found—*entre nous, s'il vous plaît*—the Russians bragging of always cheating their allies as to their numbers, and complaining of the Prussians for their want of activity and exertion, whilst on their part the Prussians were complaining of being drawn by Russia into a war beyond their power to sustain.' But if so far the situation resembled that of 1806 how much worse was it in many respects! Prussia then was a mighty Power, stretching uninterrupted from the Rhine to the Niemen, and in alliance with Hessen and Saxony. She had a mighty and renowned army. Now her army was still to make; Saxony had become a Napoleonic State, enriched with her spoils; Hessen had been swallowed up along with much of her own territory in the Napoleonic kingdom of Westphalia. Hurried on by Stein's vehemence, which had been seconded by Hardenberg, the King found himself committed to a war to be waged at such disadvantage in reliance solely upon Russia, which moreover refused to make definite promises, and now it was discovered that the Russians had given him an altogether false

impression of their numbers! If these or some of these were the thoughts over which the King was brooding in the time which followed the conclusion of the Treaty, his treatment of Stein in his illness may be partly explained.

Meanwhile it is curious to observe how differently Stein viewed the war about to begin. To him it is not a desperate attempt to bear up almost without means against an omnipotent enemy, but a war of overwhelming invasion and conquest. What occupies him is the disposal of the conquered territories and the new organisation to be given to Germany after the downfall of the Confederation of the Rhine. In this case evidently the daring imaginations and hopes, rather than the gloomy presentiments, were justified. If we compare his anticipations with the result, we see that they were only mistaken in not being bold enough, for Stein contemplates the liberation of Germany,—and for that he was considered a madman—but I do not think he looked forward to the fall of Napoleon. His views at this time are best explained by a Convention which was signed at Breslau on March 19th, that is almost immediately after his recovery.

CONVENTION BETWEEN RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA, SIGNED AT BRESLAU THE 7TH (19TH) MARCH, 1813.

The combined armies of His Majesty the Emperor and of the King of Prussia being on the point of entering the States of the Confederation of the Rhine and the provinces of North Germany which have been united to the French Empire, the two Sovereigns have judged it necessary to come to an understanding both on the political principles to be proclaimed at the moment of the occupation of these territories and on the manner in which they

may be administered to the greatest advantage of the common cause. For this purpose His Majesty the Emperor nominates as his plenipotentiaries Baron vom Stein and the Count v. Nesselrode, and the King of Prussia Baron v. Hardenberg and General v. Scharnhorst, who have agreed upon the following Articles:

ART. I. A proclamation shall be published immediately in the name of the two sovereign Powers. It shall contain simply an announcement that the two Powers have no other purpose but to withdraw Germany from the influence and domination of France, and an invitation to the Princes and the peoples to co-operate in the liberation of their country. Every German Prince who shall fail to answer this appeal within a fixed term shall be threatened with the loss of his states.

ART. II. There shall be established a Central Council of Administration furnished with unlimited powers. The allied Powers shall each nominate a member to this Council. Provisionally it shall consist of the Delegates of Russia and Prussia; the other Powers as they begin to take an active part in the operations in Germany shall acquire the right of nominating in like manner a member to this Council, and particularly the King of England. The Princes of Germany who shall accede to the Coalition shall only have the right to nominate a member collectively.

ART. III. The functions of the Council shall consist principally in organising provisional administrations in the territories which shall be occupied, in superintending these administrations, and in fixing for them the principles according to which they may avail themselves of the resources of those territories for the advantage of the common cause.

ART. IV. The revenues of the countries occupied shall be divided between Russia and Prussia equally. The regency of the country of Hannover shall participate in proportion to the contingent it shall furnish.

ART. V. All the countries which shall be occupied from Saxony to the frontiers of Holland, with the exception of the former Provinces of Prussia and those of the House of Hannover, are to be divided into five great sections, namely

(1) Saxony and the Duchies.

(2) The Kingdom of Westphalia with the exception of Hannover and the former Provinces of Prussia.

(3) The Duchies of Berg, of Westphalia and Nassau.

(4) The Department of the Lippe.

(5) The Departments of the Mouths of the Elbe and Mecklenburg.

ART. VI. For each section shall be nominated a Civil and a Military Governor. The former shall be dependent on the Central Council, the latter on the General in Chief for everything relating to military operations. The Civil Governor shall attach to himself a provisional local Council, which shall assist him in the exercise of his functions.

ART. VII. The Central Council shall also be charged with the regulation of everything which concerns the levying of recruits, the system of requisitions and of magazines for the armies in the field, and the raising of armed forces which may be necessary in the countries occupied.

ART. VIII. There shall be organised (1) an army in line (armée de ligne), (2) a Landwehr (une milice), (3) a Landsturm (levée en masse), while a formal promise shall be given to these troops that they shall in no case serve for any other purpose but the defence of Germany; the formations shall take place under the protection of a corps of the allied army.

ART. IX. The General Council shall have the right of choosing for the posts of governors and for the local administration the persons whom it may judge the most fit to perform those functions, both by their talents and by the consideration they enjoy among their fellow-countrymen.

ART. X. The arrangements contained in this plan shall be announced immediately to Austria and England.

Done at Breslau, March 7 (19), 1813.

STEIN.	HARDENBERG.
NESSELRODE.	SCHARNHORST.

It is to be observed that the system here adopted of a civil and military governor for each province does but extend to the conquered territory an organ-

isation which Prussia was at this moment adopting for herself. Prussia was now divided into four provinces, with a civil and military governor for each, among whom the reader will recognize several old friends. Sack was Civil, and Lestocq Military Governor for the territory between the Elbe and Oder, except Silesia; Beyme Civil and Tauentzien Military Governor for the Land between the Oder and Weichsel (except Silesia); Schön Civil and Massenbach Military Governor for the territory between the Weichsel and the Russian frontier; Altenstein Civil and Götzen Military Governor for Silesia.

What scarcely ever happens, we have here the advantage of a contemporary English criticism of Stein's proceedings. Mr George Jackson, writing from Hamburg on April 20th, says:

I could not but feel indignant if not surprised when Kielmansegge communicated to me the nature of the Convention that was signed at Breslau by Stein and Nesselrode on the part of Russia and by Hardenberg and Scharnhorst on that of Prussia. By it the whole of the north of Germany is divided into six (?) departments, and the whole of its revenues equally between Russia and Prussia; without any other reference to that Power by whose aid, if at all, they can hope to carry this arrangement into effect than the permission which they graciously condescend to offer us of becoming a party to it. This was signed on the 19th ult., and on the pretence of Breslau belonging to a Power not at peace with Great Britain, *le vieux Général Diplomate* (Lord Cathcart, Stein's bugbear) was not invited there, and the Convention was not communicated to the British Ambassador till the end of the month.

After describing its provisions, he remarks,

It would be out of the question to hope to reconcile this measure to those individually concerned in any other way than by the *stet pro ratione;* but in what way the Allies are to reconcile

this substitution of one revolutionary confederation for another I know not. If Bonaparte should get hold of this scheme he will play it off nicely against us. But of the two arrangements I doubt not that the German princes would prefer that of the Rhine. The only mention made of Austria is that she is to be invited to join in it; but not a word is said of Sweden.

Sweden, with the French revolutionary general now ruling it, was regarded by Stein with great jealousy. Austria could scarcely be mentioned in the Convention more distinctly than it is considering that it had not yet in any way broken with France. As to the rest of this criticism it is not difficult to discover under what influence it was written. Jackson had seen Count Münster just before leaving England, and it is Münster's opinion—that is, neither the English nor his own unprejudiced opinion, but the Hannoverian view—that is expressed in these remarks. It was natural that Hannover, which had suffered almost more than Prussia, should be sensitively jealous of Prussia's sudden resurrection. The difference between Münster and Stein grew just at this time into a quarrel, and Münster laid before the English Government a detailed criticism of Stein's Convention, which Jackson merely echoes. The Germans, Münster writes, are to be called to liberate their country, but without knowing what they are to look for:

The first thing they will perceive is a dictatorial Government assuming to itself an authority above that of their princes, and taking the management of the public revenue into its hands. They are to be informed that they must for the present resign this power to a dictator, who, according to the proposal, is more arbitrary than the French ruler himself.

After giving a history of Stein's proceedings with respect to the German question at St Petersburg in the past year, he says,

> The communications which I have since received from Baron Stein of more recent plans which he had laid before the Emperor (plans which started the idea of conquest, of a complete new order of things, of forming Germany into one Empire, or of dividing the protectorate between Austria and Prussia) have been private, but they deserve to be kept in mind, since it is evident that the Treaty of Breslau of March 7 (19) is entirely drawn up according to the proposition made in the original plan of Baron de Stein, with the chief difference, in part arising from the change in the political system of Prussia, that this Power comes in for a principal share of influence, while Sweden is less considered.

These extracts explain Jackson's criticism, which by itself would be difficult to understand. That the new Government created by the Convention was a new tyranny, as bad as that of the French, is an unreasonable position. It was no doubt a dictatorial Government, but the struggle was not against despotism but against foreign rule, not for political liberty but for national independence. The new Government was in the main German and it was to replace a French Government, and the character of Stein, even Münster would have allowed, was a guarantee that it would be animated by a good spirit. What Münster really wishes to say is not that the *people* would gain nothing by the change, but that the Hannoverian Government, which he represents, was just as unwilling to see Prussia rule in Hannover as France. And what is intelligible in Münster's mouth is repeated by Jackson in mere thoughtlessness. Thus we find that Jackson's brother, an older diplomatist, and watching affairs with

impartiality from a distance, judges very differently. He writes :

> I like very well the plan of dividing the north of Germany into departments, and Stein is an excellent man to be at the head of such a Commission. What becomes of the little Principalities would not signify, so that the military and financial interests, and the policy of the Allies, be but well served. We are to suppose that at the end of the war Alexander will be very liberal; at all events, England has nothing to do with these details. We owe nothing to the little princes, and all we have to look to is that the French be well beaten.

This to be sure is not quite the view of Stein, but it is the English view, and serves to show how purely the other is Hannoverian.

We are now at the end of another act in the drama. The dangerous transition is effected. Prussia has been torn from its connexion with France; Russia has been committed to the liberation of Germany. The two states have been brought into a close alliance. Prussia is arming her whole population. Germany is now to be called upon to follow Prussia's example, and an organisation is ready, a sort of counter Confederation of the Rhine, into which, for their own good and for the good of the whole, the German states, one after another, are to be compelled to enter. All this has been successfully achieved, and all this, the reader has had proof, was clearly planned in Stein's mind before the Russian expedition had failed. It was his plan that prevailed; and did it not prevail mainly by his efforts ? First he gained the steadfast adhesion of Alexander to all his German policy, disengaged him from Romanzoff, and armed him against the temptations of the Peace

Party. Next, by his sudden appearance in Königsberg, and by his assembling of the East Prussian Estates, he began, in conjunction with Yorck, that internal insurrection of Prussia which makes the War of Liberation so striking. Then by his decisive action in leading the Czar to push aside the scruples of Knesebeck and send him with Anstett to Breslau, he averted the danger of some fatal hesitation at the last moment on the part of the King. Once more it was his scheme for the raising of Germany that was adopted in the Convention of the 19th March; but at this point we shall see him checked in his career.

The Prussian legislation of 1807, 1808, is universally considered the work of Stein, but we seldom hear him spoken of as the principal author of that reunion of Prussia and Russia which contributed more than any other single act to the overthrow of Napoleon. Yet the latter work is in some respects more his own, and bears the stamp of his powerful personality more visibly than the former. Men of large views too often want energy, men of energy are too often narrow, and both sorts of men often want honesty and self-devotion. Often the only great and right course is hazardous, not merely to individuals but even to vast national interests, and those who see it most clearly want the courage to propose it, or at least the persistent faith to abide by the proposal, to override opposition to it, and enforce its adoption. But Stein's course will not seem the great and right one—on the contrary it will seem recklessly imprudent—unless we bear in mind that Frederick William had never in his reign seized

the proper moment for action in foreign affairs, and that he never had a better excuse for inaction than now when the Russian force proved so unexpectedly insignificant. If there was no risk of the moment being lost, Stein's vehemence was imprudent, but if there was, then Prussia owes everything to him, the end of her long humiliation and the new period of greatness and glory which followed.

We have seen him in this chapter charged with two faults. It was evident to Knesebeck that he did not trouble himself much about the fate of Prussia, provided only he could involve her in the war with Napoleon. It is equally evident to Münster that he wants to subvert Napoleon's tyranny only to set up that of Prussia. The explanation of this contradiction is that he cares for Prussia only as a means to the greatness and independence of Germany. Barely to save Prussia as a petty state between the Elbe and Weichsel he does not care at all; he would as soon see her perish. But he will put all Germany beneath her feet and sweep away all rival German States without compunction, in order by that means to make Germany independent and great and one.

This period also shows us a great turn of fortune in Stein's life. Never did he sink so low as when he lay ill, alone, and neglected by the King and Court in the attic of the Hotel Zum Zepter. It is only a month later that Jackson writes in the same letter from which I have quoted above, 'Stein is nicknamed Emperor of Germany, so great is the influence he at present enjoys.' Evidently the nickname was suggested, not merely by his great influ-

ence, but by the positive power which his new position, as acting president of the Central Administration, gave him. That Administration was intended to embrace all those territories which it was the custom in those days to call the Empire, and now that the old Empire had ceased to exist, might be thought to take its place. Its powers were for the time very large, and therefore it was scarcely more than the truth to describe the head of it as Emperor of Germany.

CHAPTER IV.

PROSPECTS OF LIBERATION.

In the vast European conflict which now begins it is particularly necessary for us to limit our field of view. In other parts of this biography we have allowed ourselves to consider whatever we might imagine to have interested Stein as a politician at the time. If we were to do so here the stream of narrative would overflow its banks and become a lake. Here therefore we shall adopt the rule of confining ourselves to the field of Stein's personal action. This rule will no doubt exclude much that is in itself most important. It will exclude the military history of the campaign, which however we should in any case avoid the presumption of treating. But as Stein was no longer in the Prussian service and did not after he left Königsberg interfere in Prussian affairs, our rule excludes also the details, so thrilling and picturesque, of the rising of Prussia. Altogether therefore this period will be briefly treated; only as Stein's position throughout was a tolerably central one, we shall be able, without

losing sight of him, to keep in view at the same time the general course of European history in this momentous transition.

His functions throughout are twofold. First he is 'Emperor of Germany,' that is, he presides over the Central Administration, afterwards re-organised under the name of Central Department. In this character he exerts a real and wide authority as well as a large patronage within Germany, and in the year 1814 also over a great part of France. Secondly he retains his position of adviser to the Czar. It was no doubt a difficult thing to combine these two functions. The latter function called him to the Russian head-quarters, wherever they might happen to be at the time. The former, like the Common Pleas in our Great Charter, could be much better attended to from some fixed centre. Stein however, in spite of some complaints, continued to attend, as well as he could, to both, and his voice was therefore always heard, and was sometimes influential at the great turning points of the policy of the Allies. Hence both that policy and the internal affairs of Germany will come before us in the narrative of his life.

We left him at Breslau, signing the Convention of the 19th of March. He is now in the first days of his enthusiasm, when for a moment perhaps he imagines that the patriotic movement of Prussia will spread to the other German States, that the Confederation of the Rhine will dissolve or change sides, and the universal Spanish insurrection repeat itself in Germany. From Kalisch, whither he now went with Walmoden, his brother-in-law, who had just been

appointed by the Prince Regent to the command of the German Legion, he writes to Hardenberg, to urge his favourite scheme of a purification of the Prussian Ministry. The letter seems to mark a tacit reconciliation between the two statesmen, whom we have seen estranged from each other since the affair of Königsberg, and a delicate abdication on Stein's part of the pretension to take the place of Hardenberg:

I confess, my dear Excellency, that I cannot share your opinion of the persons whose dismissal I think necessary: and allow me to remark that if perhaps I judge too harshly, you are disposed to an indulgence which the present crisis seems to me to make sometimes inadmissible. It is not to be denied that the French Ministers have insisted on the dismissal of the persons who did not suit their master; the mode of dismissal does not matter much. Count G(olz) will assuredly do neither good nor harm, but—such a nullity, despised alike by the public and the King, as I very well remember, why keep him? I confess to you I was ashamed at Königsberg (that is, in 1807, 1808) to know him to be my colleague. Ruling, they say, means choosing, and this is a choice I do not know how to characterise.

On the 25th appeared, in the name of Kutusoff as Commander of the allied army, an appeal to Germany, which answered to the King of Prussia's 'Appeal to my People.' It breathes the ideas of Stein in such language as the following:

They (*i.e.* the Emperor and King) demand faithful cooperation especially from every German Prince, and in doing so they gladly assume that not one will be found among them who by choosing to be and to remain a renegade to the German cause shall show himself ripe for merited destruction by the power of public opinion and the might of just arms.

The Confederation of the Rhine, that delusive chain with which the Prince of Discord fettered Germany afresh after having

dissolved it and even abolished its ancient name, can no longer be endured as an influence of foreign constraint and foreign influence.... Hereby also is declared the relation in which His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias desires to stand towards regenerated Germany and her constitution. This can be no other, since he desires to see the foreign influence destroyed, than to hold a protecting hand over a work, the form of which ought to be left altogether and alone to the Princes and peoples of Germany. The more immediately out of the inmost original spirit of the German people this work in its essential structure and outline shall issue, the more vigorous, vital and united will Germany be able to appear once more among the nations of Europe.

But these rich and grand prospects were soon to be overclouded. Indeed a certain hesitation is perceptible even in the sounding language of this proclamation. It does not distinctly repeat the menace of forfeiture which the Convention contains against all German princes who should not come in within a fixed term. Such a menace could not but involve a guarantee to all who *should* come in, and Stein had been unwilling to prejudice the right of the conquering allies to reconstruct Germany after the Peace. He himself probably would have addressed the populations directly and passed over the princes, but those who were less thorough were driven to use vague language, in which they tried to demand everything and yet to promise nothing.

On April 4th the nominations to the Board of Central Administration were made. The Czar nominated Kotschubei (whom we have marked as Stein's closest friend among the Russians) and Stein; the King of Prussia named Schön and Rhediger. Nominally Count Kotschubei was President of this

Board, but as he did not appear, his place was taken by Stein. And thus that ambiguity in his position which had been felt even in his short visit to Königsberg, followed him still. If it was happy for Frederick William and Alexander that a man like Stein stood between them to represent their alliance, to Stein himself the position could not be agreeable. He had to stand before the German public as a Russian official. In particular his relation to his colleagues on the Board was embarrassing. Wherever the interests of Prussia and Russia might come into collision he was in a manner bound to side with Russia, and was thus placed in necessary opposition both to his own country and to his own old friends. The reader will therefore be prepared for difficulties in the deliberations of the Board, and soreness in the private intercourse of Stein with the Prussian officials.

The war did not begin again till the month of May, and the aspect of affairs in April was quite different from what it immediately became on the reappearance of Napoleon. During this month the most urgent affair is to determine the King of Saxony to join the alliance. Saxony is now precisely what Prussia had been at the beginning of the year. Nominally she is in alliance with Napoleon, but her population is German, and may be summoned to rise against the general oppressor. Her generals may be called on to imitate Yorck, and if the King remains silent, some Assembly may be found at Dresden who may follow the example of the Estates at Königsberg. We have now before us a pretty clear description of the condition of Saxony at this

juncture in the French Memoirs of Count Senfft, who was then Minister to the King of Saxony. He has been referred to before as connected with Stein through his wife. She was daughter of Stein's sister Louise, whose marriage had carried her to Saxony, and Senfft remarks that the Battle of Lützen, which took place on May 2nd, was fought partly on his wife's estates. As Louise's marriage had not been satisfactory, so her daughter was one for whom Stein had little sympathy or approbation. She and her husband were identified with the French interest at the Saxon Court, and she was also charged with monstrous extravagance in expenditure. In a letter from Stein to his wife, dated May 2nd, I find the following passage, in which I suppose she is referred to: 'You will have seen the S—s; he is a miserable fellow; ..... she has elevation of soul in spite of a thousand perversities.' A long letter from him to his niece herself has also been preserved. It belongs to the year 1812, and contains a lecture on luxury veiled under the appearance of a general discussion on the economical difficulties of the time. Owing to the general impoverishment caused by long wars, people 'are now compelled,' he says, 'to practise retrenchment and renounce luxury and vain enjoyments of every kind. If you, my dear, will adopt the same course, you will certainly succeed in restoring your affairs.' Senfft does not conceal the opinion that prevailed in Saxony with respect both to himself and her, and in doing so he shows how unpopular the French now were even in Saxony, which Napoleon had treated with so much indulgence. In describing the visit Napoleon made to

Dresden on his way to Russia Senfft says, 'The Emperor Napoleon seldom went out; when he did so he encountered everywhere the sullen silence of a hatred which could not be controlled even by the fear he inspired. This feeling was not less universal in the court and in the royal family than among the public, and even M. and Mme. de Senfft began to feel the effects of it, being observed by their position and former connexions to be in constant relation with the detested French Court.' He adds that at the same time the Saxon population showed the most marked respect and sympathy for the King of Prussia. Here then, as we learn from an unexceptionable authority, was an excellent opportunity for Stein to repeat at Dresden his achievement of Königsberg. Accordingly he proceeds at once to Dresden, leaving Kalisch on April 6th, and reaching Dresden on the 9th. At Dresden he remains for the rest of the month.

Schön is of opinion that the King of Saxony might have been gained to the Allies if they would have guaranteed his sovereignty, and that he was only thrown into Napoleon's arms by the harshness of Stein, who, in his hostility to the German Princes, really desired him to prove contumacious that he might have a pretext for dethroning him. It is indeed likely that the possibility which was so nearly realised at the Congress of Vienna had already passed through his mind. But at this moment he seems to have practically discarded his original idea of sweeping away the foreign yoke and the yoke of the small princes together in one overwhelming conquest. He could not but know, for instance, that

Oldenburg must be restored to please the Czar and Hannover to please England, the English policy being just at that time surprisingly Hannoverian. Moreover his startling position, that the Princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, whether they resisted or joined the Allies, nay even the banished Princes could not claim that the conquerors should acknowledge their sovereignty, evidently presumes an overwhelming popular insurrection which should render the personal adhesion of the Princes a matter of indifference; it was a mischievous paradox if their help was to be courted. We do not find that Stein really meditates dethroning even the most guilty Princes of the Confederation. For instance, Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden are to be reduced to the dimensions they had before 1802, and to come under vassalage to Austria, that is, they are to lose the right of forming alliances and of accrediting ambassadors. We should expect, therefore, to find him proposing to assign to Saxony a corresponding position with respect to Prussia. At the time, however, that he drew up this plan (November, 1812), his views towards Saxony are still more lenient. The vassals of Prussia are to be Hannover, Hessen, Brunswick, Oldenburg, but not Saxony; and afterwards it is laid down that the Duchy of Warsaw is to be retained by the King of Saxony. It is possible that he had recognized later that, bent as the Czar was upon what he called the Restoration of Poland, this arrangement was not practicable, but there seems no reason to suppose that he had become specially hostile to the King of Saxony, though very probably he hoped to aggrandise Prussia somewhat at her

expense. At the same time, if the King resisted the Allies and abode by his French alliance, it would not cost Stein any great mental struggle to appeal directly to the population and to the army, nor would he be heart-broken if this course should lead to the fall of the Wettin dynasty. Two days after his arrival at Dresden he wrote his impressions and feelings to Nesselrode as follows:

The mass of the population is devoted to the King and desires his return, but it is not to be expected that these soft wordmongers, wedded as they are to their property, will be capable of a rising or a resistance. It is indeed very probable in the opinion of the small number of well-disposed people whom I have been able to converse with, that if the King remains devoted to Napoleon it will be possible to put the control of affairs into the hands of the Committee of Estates and make the resources of the land available for the good cause. Such an arrangement would assuredly be preferable to the return of a proud, weak, opinionated King who would claim attentions and forbearances which the chargés d'affaires and his Ministers could not pretend to, and which would obstruct business in every way.... On the whole it seems to me that the admission of the King of Saxony into the great cause is not of preeminent importance, that if he chooses to consult his own interest the letter which His Majesty the King has addressed to him will smooth the way to a negotiation, though it will cost his own and his Ministers' vanity something to owe the opportunity of it to the magnanimity of a Prince whom he has betrayed in such a cowardly manner.... If the King hesitates to declare himself or does not answer the King of Prussia's letter in a satisfactory way—and his pride, his obstinacy, his invincible prejudice for Napoleon, the fear of him which he continues to feel, the hope he entertains of being restored to his states by his victories, the hope that Austria will never quite desert him, the influence of the French Ambassador, will prevent him from doing so—then I think we may set up the Committee of Estates for the general administration of the country and may expect from it a more decided course than is taken by the Immediate Commission.

The Commission here referred to had been left in charge of affairs when the King in February, fearing the advance of Russia and Prussia into his territories, left Dresden. He first retired to Plauen on his own frontier, and afterwards to Regensburg, which being within the territory of the Confederation of the Rhine, might become his residence without giving rise to the suspicion that he intended to desert Napoleon.

The letter of the King of Prussia which Stein mentions was sent by the hand of Major-General Heister. It refers the King of Saxony to the Proclamation of Kalisch, remarks that all German populations are on fire with zeal to recover their independence, and that a bold and undisguised resolution on the part of the Princes will everywhere call forth the same evidences of energy which have appeared in an unparalleled manner in Prussia. It then announces that Baron vom Stein, Minister of State, will resort to Dresden, in order provisionally to conduct the business of calling out the resources of the country in the name of the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia. The King of Saxony is requested to charge his officials to welcome him. It is added, 'God will protect our just cause, and we shall find an abundant recompense for all the dangers and labours to which we may for a short time expose ourselves in the increased love of our subjects and in the gratitude of the latest posterity.' The King is next informed, as a thing which will not surprise him, that Prussia 'resumes possession of the territories which an unjust Treaty of Peace, which moreover had not been observed, had trans-

ferred from Prussia to Saxony.' The letter closes with a significant intimation of the painful consequences which will follow if the King of Saxony should appear as an enemy of the good cause.

It may be questioned whether there are not too many threats in this letter, but I think an implicit promise runs through it that the King of Saxony shall retain his sovereignty on condition of joining the Allies, except in the territories taken from Prussia at Tilsit. For the menaces Stein can scarcely be responsible, for he was not at this time so near to the King of Prussia as to dictate his letters to him. Nor, though Senfft tells us that the letter, and particularly the reference to the Proclamation of Kalisch, did give offence, ought we to assume too readily that an imperious tone was injudicious. The feeling of the people was at that moment so strong that perhaps the most powerful argument which could be addressed to the King was a hint that if he refused to act the people would be asked to act without him. The answer of the King of Saxony, dated Regensburg, April 16th, is entirely evasive, and contains nothing but complimentary phrases. But on the 29th he wrote another letter from Prag, whither he had gone in the meantime, and this letter, though equally wordy, is not equally empty[1]. It announces that in consequence of a complete agreement in sentiment between the Saxon and the Austrian Court the King

[1] The correspondence was published soon after in an official pamphlet on 'the Behaviour of the King of Saxony,' which Pertz reprints in an appendix (III. p. 665).

had been induced to 'attach himself to the armed mediation of Austria.' Such then was the policy adopted by the Saxon Court, and it is explained to us by Count Senfft, who seems to have originated it. He writes in the tone of one who was in fact thoroughly estranged from France, though generally believed to be devoted to her. He describes it to have been his object to sever the Government from Napoleon's interest, and as far as possible to favour the national cause, but he argues that Saxony, not having the same wrongs to avenge as Prussia, would not have been justified in going so far as Prussia had done. No doubt the alliance of Saxony with France was very different from that of Prussia, and her defection in the first moment of Napoleon's misfortune would have had all the appearance of ingratitude. But was any middle course possible? It seemed to Senfft that Austria might be regarded as the head of a *tiers parti* in Europe. Austria put herself forward as a mediating Power, and was able to play this part to its legitimate end. She actually took no part in the campaign which followed, and when on the expiration of the armistice which began in June she entered into the war on the side of the Allies, this was because Napoleon had rejected the terms which were backed by her mediation. Senfft's policy then is to induce the King of Saxony to adhere to Austria's mediation.

Stein treats this device of the 'finessing' Minister, as he calls him, with great contempt. And surely the position of Saxony was quite different from that of Austria. The part of a mediator can only be assumed by a Prince or Power that is no

party to the dispute; this was practically the condition of Austria, though technically she was still in alliance with Napoleon and at war with Russia. But Saxony was a leading member of the Confederation of the Rhine, which for all purposes of foreign policy was under the absolute control of Napoleon, and the destruction of which was a main object of the war undertaken by the Allies. She was, in fact, identified with one of the belligerents, and Stein very reasonably exclaims: 'As if it was at the option of one of the belligerents to retire from participation in the war which he has hitherto helped to wage, and to declare to the other belligerent that he is neutral!' Perhaps it is merely saying the same thing in other words, to point out that a State which is to mediate must not be one whose own territory, troops and fortresses, are the objects for which the belligerents contend. Yet this was the position of Saxony. Saxony was in possession of country torn from Prussia, and its territory was just that part of the hostile land which the Allies would begin by invading, and indeed had already invaded; one of their first strategical objects was to get possession of Torgau, the Saxon fortress on the Elbe, garrisoned at this time by 10,000 troops under General Thielemann. On the other hand, Napoleon had been counting on the Saxon army as on his own, and by the terms of the Act of the Confederation of the Rhine he had a right to do so. He was in great want of cavalry, and a messenger now came from him to Regensburg to demand that the two regiments of horse which had accompanied the King should join the

Grand Army. Great and natural was his indignation when the demand was met by a refusal.

Meanwhile the Central Administration was beginning its work. It is to be observed that the situation and prospects of the Allies were much more brilliant at this time, that is, early in April, than they were afterwards until the battle of Leipzig was fought. Since his Russian disaster Napoleon had as yet done nothing, while he had suffered a second disaster almost as serious in the defection of Prussia, the renewal of its alliance with Russia, and the enthusiastic uprising of its population. The allied armies were in the field, and as yet there was no army to oppose them. Accordingly they everywhere took the offensive. The territories of the Confederation of the Rhine and even in some parts the French Empire itself were invaded, and it might seem for a moment that Napoleon's power in Germany was crumbling rapidly away. The mere fact that Stein was in Dresden reminds us that Saxony was in the hands of the Allies, though Torgau was not yet theirs. Meanwhile Tettenborn was setting the Northern Coast free. His troops entered the French Departments of the Lippe, the Upper and Lower Ems, the Mouths of the Elbe, and the Mouths of the Weser. Hamburg was evacuated by St Cyr on March 12th, and entered by Tettenborn. Some of this territory was soon lost again, but for the moment it seemed that the Central Administration would be fully occupied in turning to account the resources of the new conquests.

This month then may perhaps be regarded as among the glorious moments of Stein's life. We

have a picture of him at this moment drawn by the enthusiastic Steffens, who had made his acquaintance while he lay in what Steffens describes as his 'very shabby, almost dirty sick room' at Breslau.

Here, he writes, for the first time I approached the great German closely. It is known to all who were acquainted with him that he was one who must be encountered with some resolution if you were not to be completely overpowered by him; but the struggle which I had here often to maintain was on ground on which I had practised myself all my life long to fight. I knew my weapons and their effect and how to use them, the struggle was friendly and yet at times severe, and I was no ways disposed to give ground, and the hotter it grew the more clearly I seemed to see that the Baron vom Stein had a pleasure in provoking it. He, the powerful man, the man of direct action, who could seize, comprehend and control the moment as it came before him, was, or professed to be, an enemy of speculation, and assailed me as a builder of speculative theories with an unsparing severity, as if he would try whether I had courage to meet him. His attack was a challenge and I accepted it. Sometimes in Dresden I was invited to his table; only Moritz Arndt and I being the guests. 'Your *a priori* constructions,' says he, 'are empty words, miserable school gibberish, and have simply the effect of hindering action.' 'Your Excellency,' I replied, 'if I make *a priori* constructions, which I do not at all admit, this so-called construction must have some practical tendency, for otherwise I should not have the happiness of standing before you at this moment in this dress. But the endeavour to gather into an intellectual unity all our internal experience, all our real life in its reality and not merely in its appearance, is not an accidental growth in this man or that man, but a natural growth of the German mind; and if my great teacher and friend Schelling rules this deep national craving it is, as with all rulers, because he comes out of it.' 'Ay,' said Stein, 'I know very well that the German youth is infected with this empty disease of speculation: the German has an unfortunate turn for groping, that is why he does not grasp the present and has always been a safe booty to his shrewder and cleverer enemies.'

'Your Excellency,' I answered, 'our youth has risen *en masse* in a most cheering manner; still no small number have remained at home. Now I am ready to lay a wager that not one of your infected is among these. Who has come forward more boldly or more energetically roused the people when the enemy was to be resisted with intellectual weapons than the two groping speculative Germans, Fichte and Schleiermacher? The *a priori* method,' I went on, 'is often used in the act of combating it, and the grand life of action which your Excellency has led cannot have left you much time to trouble yourself about our gropings; but it seems to me positively unpractical to overlook a disposition of mind, which, as you admit and regret, is a material element in the nation.' I was almost shocked at my own somewhat downright frankness of expression; Stein chafed and looked angry, but at the same time laughed loudly. 'Well!' he said, 'after all I am an unpractical groper, for I lose myself in useless gropings about groping.' But I thought I had gained in his estimation by the very freedom with which I had expressed myself.

Other schoolmen besides Steffens were tempted at that crisis to strive in an unwonted manner to 'grasp the present.' Stein was besieged by the projectors of wild schemes for applying science to the conduct of the war, and Arndt was witness to his indignation when a certain Professor Hauff laid before him a mass of papers and drawings to show how the enemy's artillery might be frustrated by a great magnetic battery which should move in front of the army and attract the cannon balls!

While Stein was at Dresden Goethe passed through on his way to the baths of Carlsbad. It was during this visit and at the house of Körner, Schiller's friend and the father of the Tyrtaeus of the War of Liberation, that he was heard to exclaim, 'Oh, my good friends! you may shake your chains, but you will not free yourselves from them; the man is too

great for you.' Perhaps we ought to regard this utterance as in some degree official, for Goethe must have felt that he represented the Duke of Weimar, and that he was in a manner bound in the presence of the patriotic party to plead the cause of those who, like his master, still felt themselves unable to shake off the yoke. Stein used forbearance, as he commonly did with Goethe; 'let him alone,' he said, 'he has grown old.'

At this time, too, Stein makes the acquaintance of a man who was to be one of the most agreeable friends of his old age. Hans. Ernst Christoph v. Gagern (father of that Heinrich v. Gagern whom we remember as the hero of the Frankfurt Parliament) was like Stein himself an Imperial Knight. He was born near Worms in 1766; his father had been an officer in one of those German regiments which in the old regime made a part of the French army, the regiment Royal-Deux-Ponts. He had a French preceptor, and afterwards went to a Jesuit school at Worms. Thus reared on a Debateable Land, both of nationality and of religion, he grew up what he called an eclectic, that is precisely what Stein was not. He first entered the official service to which his father had been attached, that of Zweibrücken (Deux-Ponts), and then after a year spent at Vienna, where he saw something of Prince Kaunitz, became Minister to the Prince of Nassau-Weilburg, just as Stein, had not Heinitz enticed him into the service of Frederick, might have passed his life as Minister in the Electoral Court of Mainz. Throughout this book Nassau has appeared among the leading vassals of France and of Napoleon, and

Gagern's course from the commencement of the revolutionary period was not such as to promise that he would ever enjoy the friendship of Stein. He was at Paris in 1803, along with the Ministers of the other small States, to beg for scraps of secularised territory; he was there again in 1806 to gather the spoils of mediatised princes, when the German house of Nassau had the pleasure of enriching itself at the expense of its kindred of Nassau-Orange, and to sign his name to the Act of the Confederation of the Rhine. After Jena he was influential at the French head-quarters in Poland in saving by the interest of Nassau with Napoleon some of the small sovereignties of North Germany, and in 1808 he dedicated the first Part of his History of Morals to Napoleon.

His change of politics took place in 1811. The Edict of Trianon declared all persons born on the Left Bank of the Rhine to be French subjects, and Gagern thereupon abandoned the service of Nassau and went to Vienna to devote himself to the liberation of the country. Here he showed that the feeling of nationality was gathering strength in him by beginning his National History of the Germans, of which Goethe remarked that 'the man meant to do something more than write a book.' After the Russian catastrophe he entered with the Archduke Johann, Baron v. Hormayr and others into a plan for raising a popular insurrection throughout the whole Alpine region. But the Austrian Government had already learnt to fear its own people almost as much as the enemy. The leaders of the undertaking were arrested on March 7th, and the Archduke ordered into re-

tirement. Gagern was bidden to quit the country, but Metternich made use of him to convey his good wishes to the new Alliance just formed in the North. It was natural that he should look forward eagerly to a meeting with the chief of the national party, but when he reached Breslau Stein was no longer there. He sends a letter to him at Kalisch, and this letter may be considered the commencement of a long correspondence between Gagern and Stein, which was published by the former in 1833. It also introduces us to a new variety of German political sentiment which will soon require our attention. Gagern assures his correspondent that public feeling in Munich is as strongly German as elsewhere, and that the Minister Montgelas, whose policy had been even more French than that of Senfft, felt his position, and desired friends, counsel, help, and a way of escape. But Montgelas must know clearly what sacrifices will be expected of Bavaria, and must receive a formal assurance of indemnity, whether it be a complete indemnity, or a tolerable *status quo* in respect to the old hereditary territories which they have lost or ceded (*i.e.* to France in return for grants in Germany), or thirdly restitution up to a definite amount corresponding to the military success. Otherwise he is sure Bavaria will resist obstinately and do much harm to the good cause. At the same time he gives the substance of a communication made to him orally by Metternich. It is to the effect that Austria and Prussia were never more united in feeling, and that this will soon be published to the world, but Metternich regrets that 'the Prussian declarations should have spoken

of views upon the provinces beyond the Rhine rather than of personal hostility towards Napoleon.'

Stein's answer is short and quietly courteous. It soon appeared, however, that his feeling towards Gagern was altogether friendly, for an express from the Prince of Orange reached Gagern in Breslau, to offer him the post of Minister to himself, and it appeared that Stein had been the Prince's first choice, and that Stein, after refusing the post for himself, had recommended the appointment of Gagern. Gagern is gratified, and says in his next letter to Stein that he is in the fullest accordance with his plans if, as he understands, they aim at giving Germany a new form like the old one in the main, but with its deficiencies supplied. I suspect the new form of Germany which Stein had in his mind was less like the old one than Gagern supposed. In the middle of April the two statesmen met in Dresden; I do not know that they had ever met before. According to Arndt, Metternich and his intentions formed their principal topic of conversation.

There is preserved a letter of Gagern's dated April 26th, written in Dresden to Stein in Dresden, and answered by Stein on the same day, which gives one the impression that in a personal interview where Gagern had been very effusive and diffusive, Stein had replied, 'If you will put down in the fewest possible words exactly what you want, I will, though very busy, attend to it immediately.' Gagern makes four requests, of which the third only is interesting here. He had received a commission from the Elector of Hessen to further his interests with the

Northern Sovereigns, and as a representative of Hessen he suggests that Stein may consider whether he is willing to receive him into his Central Administration, and will favour his admission into it. He adds the following words: 'I desire it and attach value to it only on the supposition that it will be an honourable post, where every man will have his *franc parler*, and the proceedings will have such a form and tendency that they may be freely published to this generation and to posterity and to other nations.' What is here hinted at is evident, or, if not, is explained by a remark addressed by the same Gagern to Count Münster, in a letter written a few months later, where he says that the Central Administration has a too strongly Russian tincture in its initiative, and that Russian patronage and interference will be 'as mischievous *à la longue* as French.' One sees here the weak point of Stein's position, and is not surprised to find that his answer is in his stiff manner. After saying that 'the Elector of Hessen cannot have a representative on the Board until he reenters into possession of his territory, he adds: 'Every member has *franc parler*, but the majority has *franc décider*. I know as yet of no member of the Administrative Board who has reason to be ashamed of his manner of acting, or need have any objection to exhibit it either to his contemporaries or to posterity.' Gagern apologises, and says that when he spoke of *franc parler* he was not thinking of the members of the Board, but whether the Board might not be controlled from above. He went to England soon after, on the business of the Prince of Orange, and wrote a letter of temporary

farewell, in which he marks very plainly the sort of relation in which he hoped to stand to Stein. 'For myself I want nothing but your friendship, only not Cicero's *amicitia mediocris*, but a full, genuine, old-German friendship.... I have at times poured water into your wine, but I am not all water. In other words, if you mean to be Dr Luther in our political Reformation I should make a very good Melanchthon. They loved each other, and yet their views were often different.... And so, my dear Dr Martinus, truly your Gagern-Melanchthon.' Perhaps Stein could not so soon altogether forget the Confederation of the Rhine; at any rate, this letter went unanswered.

Meanwhile the fate of Saxony remained in suspense. We seem to see distinctly what Stein had intended and anticipated. General Thielemann, whose patriotic views were known, was to play the part of Yorck and carry over his corps and with it the fortress of Torgau to the Allies. Then, as in Königsberg, a *levée en masse* of the population was to be set on foot. Whether the King authorised these proceedings beforehand, or accepted them afterwards, or washed his hands of them altogether, was to Stein a matter of little concern. But this plan failed in Saxony as completely as it had succeeded in Prussia.

In an interview which Thielemann had with Stein and Boyen, he said in so many words, I am no General Yorck! upon which Stein was so much disappointed that he broke off the conference. Meanwhile, perverse as he might hold Senfft's scheme of adhering to the Austrian mediation to be, he did not

find it possible to disregard it altogether and appeal at once to the people. For it must have been clear to him already that his plan of the campaign, publicly announced as it had been in the Proclamation of Kalisch, and zealously advocated as it still was among the Prussian volunteers, was rejected alike by the Russian and the Prussian Government. Arndt tells us that he and Steffens once talked at Stein's table of the harm done by delay, and how easy it would be to raise and drill some fifteen or twenty thousand men from the Saxon population, who would fight for Germany just as well as the Pomeranians and the Mecklenburgers; whereupon Stein grew angry, started up, and with a gesture and tone as if he would turn them out of the room said, 'Go, gentlemen; I am as clever as you, but I am neither Emperor of Russia nor King of Prussia.' We read in an Austrian diplomatic report that both those Sovereigns had regarded the Proclamation with strong disapprobation and had peremptorily forbidden the Generals to issue more such manifestoes. Though we can hardly reconcile this either with the adoption of the Proclamation by the King of Prussia in his letter to the King of Saxony or with the equally clear adoption of it about the same time in the Prussian advances to Bavaria, yet it seems to have been gradually suffered to fall into oblivion. Meanwhile the small Princes did not respond to its appeal. Only Mecklenburg-Schwerin came in, and its Government offered to furnish 140 men! 'Upon this,' writes Lebzeltern, 'the fiery Minister vom Stein declared that the present war and the present object was not

to be served by such paltry contributions; the question at issue was the freedom and independence of the German Princes, and therefore it was just and natural that they should exhaust all their means in a cause which was their own; besides, this war must be the last. He demanded therefore the *whole* contingent of Mecklenburg, a contribution in money and 6000 bushels of hay, a burden the land was well able to bear.' 'But,' urged the Minister, accustomed to the deliberate proceedings of Regensburg, 'there must first be a general tariff, calculated with reference to territory, population, and revenue.' 'Good,' replied Stein, 'but *till* such tariff is settled we must act and not a moment must be lost.' The Minister 'went away sorrowful,' first assuring Lebzeltern that the North German Courts placed all their dependence upon Austria.

The month of April closed with a great change in the prospects of the Allies. The respite which was allowed them while Napoleon prepared his new army came to an end. He was at hand, and the Confederation of the Rhine was with him. Even along the northern coast most of what had been won was lost again. A reign of terror was established by the French in Bremen, and in the end, though not till the latter part of May, Hamburg was retaken by Davoust. In Saxony the approach of Napoleon dispersed at once all the uncertainties of the Court. In the very last days of April Senfft had written, 'We are separated irrevocably from France.' But a letter written by Napoleon's orders came from the Duke of Weimar, announcing that the total destruction of Saxony was decreed if the Saxon

troops failed to join the Grand Army. The King still held out, but now, on May 2nd, took place the Battle of Lützen, or Gross-Görschen, and as Senfft writes, 'The miseries of his country, the ruin of Leipzig, the menaces of the Emperor presented themselves vividly to the imagination of this unfortunate prince, and at the critical moment M. de Senfft did not find in himself the energy to combat his alarms.' In the end Anatole de Montesquieu arrives from Napoleon to require the King's assent within six hours to three demands, first, the surrender of Torgau, secondly, a declaration of unwavering adhesion to the Confederation of the Rhine, thirdly, a precise explanation of his relations with Austria. The King surrendered. Senfft retired into Austria; General Thielemann entered the Prussian service; Torgau became a French fortress; and Dresden, where Stein had first appeared in his part of Emperor of Germany, became in a very short time the head-quarters of Napoleon.

In this eventful and changeful year each month has its peculiar character. The war which now begins falls in fact into two wars, very different in character from each other, and divided by an armistice of two months. The armistice extends from the 4th of June to the 10th of August. At the latter date begins a war in which Prussia, Austria and Russia are for the first time allied, and heartily allied, against France, and this war brought Napoleon down. The war which occupied the month of May, on the other hand, was waged by Prussia and Russia only against France, and neither of the two allied States was yet thoroughly armed. Russia

had not yet finished her new levies, and the Prussian Landwehr does not yet appear in the field. In this war Napoleon outnumbers his enemies, and in the other he is outnumbered by them. In this war accordingly he is successful, as in the other he is worsted. Thus the month of May offers a strong contrast to that of April. It is a time of disappointment and reverse.

In particular, the operations of the Central Administration were suspended for a considerable time by the loss of most of the territory over which its authority extended. The members of the Board had not long been assembled; still their work seems to have begun. They had nominated Count Reisach, a Bavarian, to be Governor of a Saxon district, and Alopäus had been sent in the same character to Mecklenburg. They had got a war-contribution from the Governing Commission of Saxony, which paid Schön 100,000 thalers on the very day of the battle of Gross-Görschen. But the ground was taken from under them by the defeat which the Allies suffered there. Not only did the King of Saxony immediately afterwards throw himself into the arms of Napoleon, but the country also passed out of the control of the Allies. The Czar and the King of Prussia had entered Dresden more than a week before the battle. According to Schön the King's feeling towards Stein had not yet become more favourable. 'He kept him at a distance on account of his Russian Commission, and even inflicted social slights upon him, for he excluded him from a great official dinner which he gave.' 'It was remarkable,' adds Schön, 'that Stein, as Russian plenipotentiary,

appeared on all occasions in a Prussian chamberlain's dress, with the Prussian Order of the Red Eagle, as he had no other uniform or order. No doubt he could have procured a Russian uniform immediately, but he thought it important, in spite of the treatment he underwent from our King, which hurt him much, still to maintain the appearance of a German.' The autobiography informs us that immediately after the Königsberg affair he had refused a second offer made by the Czar of appointment in the Russian service.

Saxony was at this time in the hands of the Allies, and the result of their defeat at Gross-Görschen was that they lost it again. On May 11th Napoleon entered Dresden, entered for the last time a capital city at the head of a victorious army. In an address to his army on the day after the battle he described himself as the champion of order, and the Allies as revolutionists, animated by the 'preachers of rebellion, anarchy, and civil war, the apostles of crime, who would kindle a moral conflagration between the Weichsel and the Rhine.' What particular persons he had in view appears from a letter of May 7th, in which he says, 'The notorious Stein is the object of the contempt of all respectable people. He wanted to raise the rabble against the proprietors. It is impossible to resist astonishment that rulers like the King of Prussia, and especially the Emperor Alexander, whom nature has endowed with so many noble qualities, should give the sanction of their names to designs as criminal as they are shocking.'

Stein now, his occupation gone for the present,

accompanied the army in its retreat. This took the direction of Silesia, since everything depended upon keeping open the communication with Austria. The war had begun in the same way as that of 1806, and it is said that the King, when Alexander in the night after the battle pressed on him the necessity of a retreat, said, 'It is just as it was at Auerstädt: I feel very sure that if once we begin to retreat we shall not stop at the Elbe, but shall cross the Weichsel too, and so I see myself back in Memel again.' But now the Army and the Government had an armed nation under them. It was found possible to leave Berlin to take care of itself, Boyen being sent thither to hurry on the organization of the Landwehr and the Landsturm. We find Stein at Görlitz on the 19th. The battle of Bautzen was fought on the 20th and 21st, and on the 22nd Stein is at Lobau. As the armies retreated into Silesia he left the head-quarters and paid a visit to his family at Prag, where he arrived on the 29th, or according to Ompteda the 28th. At Prag he saw Scharnhorst for the last time, and set out again, in company with Ompteda, for head-quarters. At Reichenbach, where they arrived on the 7th of June, Stein remained as long as the armistice lasted. Napoleon has not forgotten him, and at times spite makes his scurrility positively ingenious. Stein's friends seem to have been really amused when they read that the Emperor was received by the inhabitants and officials of Bautzen with 'the feelings natural to allies who congratulate themselves on being freed from *the Steins, the Kotzebues, and the Cossacks.*'

CHAPTER V.

THE ARMISTICE.

WHEN we reached Nachod, our last Bohemian stopping-place (writes Ompteda), we heard that an armistice had been concluded in Silesia between the belligerents. Minister vom Stein absolutely refused to give credence to this announcement. In order to procure more trustworthy information therefore I betook myself to the seat of the Duchess of Sagan, which stood beautifully situated upon a high hill, for I knew her steward as a sensible, trustworthy man. Through him I obtained a confirmation of the announcement concerning the Armistice and details of its conditions, with the addition that the head-quarters of the Allied Sovereigns were in or near Reichenbach. The Baron vom Stein was beside himself at the news, and we hurried all the faster to reach the head-quarters. After Nachod we reached the Silesian bathing-place Reinertz, where we resolved to dine, as Minister vom Stein travelled with his own horses, and as he knew that the well-known Baron v. Gagern was staying at Reinertz we drew up at his house. Reinertz had been assigned for the time as a place of residence both for Baron v. Gagern and for the Danish Ambassador accredited to the Prussian Court, Baron v. Eyben, since they were unwilling to be seen in the head-quarters. Besides these Prince Hatzfeld happened to be at the same place. These persons had a cook and table in common. *But as Baron vom Stein could not be induced to take his meal in the company of*

the two last-named persons (Prince Hatzfeld had long been known as the head of the French party of Berlin) Baron v. Gagern was compelled for this time to have his portion fetched, and this was magnanimously made so large that we were able all three to dine well off it.

We can well understand that Stein was beside himself when he heard that the armistice was concluded. Perhaps at the moment he, in common with many others, believed that it was only the prelude to another Treaty like that of Tilsit, but if he merely judged it for what it was he must have seen in it the failure and the abandonment of his policy. The war, as we know, was resumed afterwards, and Stein's principal object, the overthrow of Napoleon, was attained as completely as he could desire, but it was not attained in the way he wished nor by means from which he expected success.

He contemplated, as we have seen, a *levée en masse* of all Germany, accompanied with the downfall of a good many renegade Governments, and up to this point his method had not been openly renounced. It had been applied to Prussia; he had himself set on foot the *levée en masse* there, and forced the Government to follow in the wake of the people. His language had been adopted in the Proclamation of Kalisch and in the Prussian negotiations with Saxony and Bavaria. The method was in itself perfectly adequate to the object, and it was not Stein's fault that it had gradually broken down. But it was evidently a method which kings and princes would not use without extreme unwillingness, for it involved a political revolution. To many of them it seemed like casting out devils

through Beelzebub. It was already become usual to speak of Stein as a revolutionist or as a Jacobin, and if the second epithet was entirely out of place, the first was appropriate. He was working a revolution, only not the French Revolution, but one essentially different. It was not the rights of man but the rights of the nation that he preached; the right of the nation to its independence, its separateness, its special institutions and history, and its right to require its rulers to guarantee these on pain of deposition. But this doctrine not less than the French one, though in quite a different way and a different spirit, contained a threat to rulers, and was therefore unwelcome to them. Frederick William had long since taken fright. Alexander naturally was less nervous, for he had always toyed with liberal opinions, and was in the proud position of having just led his nation through a glorious war of independence. But the opinion of his caste could not fail to influence him; he saw the black looks of the Duke of Oldenburg; he heard the talk of his Würtemberg mother. There is a story which has no date, but seems to belong to this period, that he once appealed to Stein to know where he was to find husbands for the Russian Grand Princesses, if all the small German Sovereigns were mediatised, and that Stein replied in his stiff manner, 'I did not know that your Majesty meant to turn Germany into a Russian *stud!*' But of all the Sovereigns the Emperor of Austria had the greatest dread of Stein's doctrine, and that not merely from the narrowness of his own mind or from the inveterate tradition of his house, but from the nature of his State, which

being composed of heterogeneous populations, would not be strengthened, but would run the risk of being dissolved, if they should wake to political consciousness.

Meanwhile it was evident that Stein's plan was not the only possible one. Another war of the old kind might be waged against Napoleon. Without any direct appeals to the people, it might be possible by a more earnest and resolute coalition of the Great Powers than had ever been attainable before to bring Napoleon to terms. He was now at the head of the last army that it would be possible for him to raise, and Austria had learned by recent experience that, as Metternich expressed it in his instructions to Prince Schwarzenberg (March 28th), 'Austria and Prussia, two nations formerly at rivalry, have seen of late their interests become absolutely identical,' so that 'any weakening of one of the two Central Powers is a direct blow at the existence of the other.' But this plan and Stein's excluded each other. Austria would require that the revolutionary system should be abandoned, and Alexander, who had a kind of casting vote, could not but recognize, however he might sympathise with Stein's popular views, that for Russian purposes to gain Austria was the indispensable thing.

When the war begins again then the day of Stein's influence is gone by. Only what had been already done could not be undone. The Prussian army is animated by the new principle, so that Blücher's head-quarters are spoken of in Metternich's circle as a nest of Jacobinism, and Stein occasionally asserts it with vigour. But Austria's

whole influence is devoted to stripping the war of all political significance or effect.

We have seen that at Dresden Stein began to feel himself hampered in the execution of his plans. During his short visit to Prag he wrote to Count Kotschubei in Russia, as follows:

Your presence here would be of the greatest service. You would watch over Russia's interest, which a foreigner like me cannot understand; you would point out how Germany may be made serviceable in a manner that will suit you; you would preserve agreement and unity among the different parts which compose the Board by your conciliatory and moderate spirit. Your presence will give satisfaction to the national self-love; the Russians will be glad to have a Russian name in an organisation to which they gave the first impulse. There are besides several other motives leading me to wish for your arrival, which I must not trust to paper.

It is curious to see that while the Germans were complaining of being subjected to Russian influence on the Board, Stein is anxious to increase that influence. Perhaps, however, he was mainly desirous of lightening the invidiousness of his position as the *only* representative of Russia on the Board. But I imagine his principal reason for desiring Kotschubei to come was that he might strengthen his influence with the Czar. He remarks in his autobiography,

While the head-quarters were at Dresden there arrived v. Lebzeltern, formerly Ambassador at St Petersburg, a crafty adroit man, of mean morals and habits; he acquired the complete confidence of Count Nesselrode and of his wife who ruled him, and was supported by her parents, Count Gourief, the Finance Minister, and his wife; to the Gourief party also belonged Tolstoi, the Superior Marshal who accompanied the Emperor—he had been about his person since his fifteenth year, and had considerable

influence with him, which however he used only with thorough Russian cunning concealed under a varnish of rough frankness.

This passage describes the growth of a party in Alexander's Court by which, it is hinted, Stein found his own influence undermined, and it was natural that he should try to counterbalance this by calling in his own special friend Count Kotschubei. The decline in his influence of which he was himself conscious was noted by others, for Ompteda, writing on July 2nd, after describing the ambition of the Countess Nesselrode and Nesselrode's own jealousy of his colleague Anstett, continues thus:

It appears that Anstett, able as he is, has not succeeded in inspiring confidence. He is besides ill seen at the Court of Vienna, and I am assured that the Russian Court has engaged not to employ him in its relations with Austria. Baron vom Stein has always had freer access to the Emperor, still he sees that prince less often, and although the Emperor treats him even now with much confidence, one can easily perceive that he is not initiated into all the secrets of general policy, and his share in affairs is limited in the main to the affairs of Germany (that is perhaps the Central Administration) and to those of the German Legion formed in Russia. Baron vom Stein has remarked to me several times that for some time past Count Nesselrode has begun imperceptibly to separate himself from him, as far as business allows.

It is, I think, clear that the decline of Stein and the rise of Nesselrode were not the effect of a mere caprice of Alexander's, but that they mark that he had silently made his choice in favour of the Austrian method of carrying on the war. Even Arndt noted that Nesselrode seemed specially employed to pour water into Stein's wine.

We cannot but doubt whether the admiration Stein never ceased to express for Alexander would not have been extinguished had he known how recklessly Alexander was giving away at this time to Lebzeltern the interests of Prussia. He was promising the restoration of Austria not only to her former territory but also 'to her ancient ascendancy over the states of Germany.' He was offering to hand over to Austria the power of making arrangements with the South German Courts in the name of the Allies; he was undertaking to sign any such arrangements that Austria might send him. We shall see later how much Prussia suffered from this determination of the Czar to win Austria at all costs, and from his disregard of the engagement he had taken at Kalisch to inform the King of Prussia of every step he took. Nevertheless Stein doubtless had never supposed that Alexander's intervention in German affairs was disinterested; he knew better than any man that it was to Russia a necessary measure of defence; and though he probably expected the Czar to observe his promises yet he would be able to make large allowance for the difficulty of his position.

In the end Stein seems to have made the best of what he could not help. He did not sulk or withdraw from the common cause because a policy which was not his own had prevailed. But for some time the risk involved in the change of plans must have been terrible to one who felt as he did. It was the risk of losing the popular force without getting instead the military power of Austria; for he might

doubt whether Austria was not almost indifferent which of the two sides might win. Napoleon had given her a family interest in his empire; the heir to it was the Austrian Emperor's grandson. On the other hand Prussia was her ancient rival and had now begun also to wear the appearance of a revolutionary Power. Suppose, after the popular enthusiasm had been suffered to cool in a two months' armistice, Napoleon should win Austria to his side by large concessions! Suppose again a treaty should be concluded through Austria's mediation which should leave him in possession of the greater part of his dominions. Austria herself had just afforded an example of the deplorable result of a high policy adopted and then abandoned. In 1809 Stadion had guided her counsels and heroes had fought in her armies. She too had had her War of Liberation, but now she had learnt to sneer at the emotions of that time. Marie Louise had been sacrificed, and the Vienna wits trusted that now Napoleon was infected with Austrian stupidity and Austrian ill-luck! Metternich had now the charge of her policy, and its spirit was again as cynical, if not so daringly immoral, as in the days of Thugut. Prussia would probably run a similar course if the enthusiasm of 1813 should issue in failure. Yet Stein was now almost powerless, and during the two months which followed could do little more than wish and hope and wait.

It was one of the most uncomfortable periods of his life. His gout still plagued him; suspense heightened his irritableness and the same suspense made all around him irritable. A quarrel with Niebuhr had begun before he left Dresden, as will

appear from the following letter, which at the same time will inform the reader what that old friend is doing in this busy time.

He writes to Arndt from Berlin on April 15th, announcing that he has become the editor of a paper which had begun to appear on April 1st: 'Perhaps you have seen already the Prussian Correspondent. It has cost infinite pains and annoyance to procure permission to publish it; but in the end Hardenberg has been prevailed upon.' He means this paper as 'an antidote to Kotzebue's worthless and mischievous publication, on which our dull public browses, hoping so to authorise itself to combine inner baseness with a dash of so-called good political opinions.' He hopes for communications from Arndt, 'for example, the Publicanda and proceedings of that Commission whose Chief you accompany; news; everything important and interesting.' He then adds,

> If you know in what relation I once stood to H. vom Stein, it must strike you as unnatural that I do not give you a message to him. He has injured me more than any other person in the world; he has trampled under foot the truest affection, and sacrificed all the confidence of it to his blind prejudice for a most miserable fellow; I mean Hardenberg; he has betrayed a letter. God forgive him! and God is my witness that I do not the less wish him well because he has sinned thus. I wish him no punishment but heartily to despise the man for whom he did this, and often to be reminded of it by his conscience, though his pride will not allow him again to offer his hand heartily to me, who would so easily and willingly pardon. After all, there is no such thing as friendship with a man of high birth!

Nothing seems to be certainly known about the sin referred to in this heart-rending passage, except

that Stein afterwards told Arndt that he had shown Hardenberg, with perfectly innocent intentions, a paper of Niebuhr's on the Administration of Domain Lands. The letter is so worded as to give the impression that the injury had been aggravated by an intolerable haughtiness and coldness in Stein's manners, until we remember that Niebuhr had actually not set eyes on Stein for five years at the time when it was written! The only foundation there can have been for what is said of his pride must be that Stein had answered in his stiff manner a letter of Niebuhr's charging him with a breach of confidence, which was only natural if he thought the charge unreasonable and absurd. One would also gather that the misunderstanding would prevent them from holding intercourse with each other; but though a complete breach did occur later, this was not yet the case. Niebuhr soon after left Berlin for Dresden. He did not, as is stated in his biography, become a member of the Central Administration, but was employed in the negotiations with England concerning a subsidy. The language he uses on May 3rd, in speaking of Stein and Hardenberg, seems hardly consistent with the tone of the above letter: 'I have to act with Baron v. Hardenberg and H. vom Stein. I had not seen the former since my retirement from office, but his behaviour towards me is just what it used to be, and as if our connexion had never been interrupted. Stein is unequal (perhaps he is soured by his misfortunes), and hence it is often difficult to deal with him.'

Arndt's answer (April 24th) is also interesting, and shows that his full enthusiasm for Stein grew

upon him more gradually than we should suppose from his autobiographical writings.

You may pretty well understand my position here, that is *at the side* of affairs and not *in* them, and this is really the position of those also who fancy they are in them. I wish we had one who really was in them. Stein is not, for with honest intentions he does no more than make leaps, or sometimes thrusts too; bolder than the boldest on the whole, but in particular cases often painful. My relation to Stein was originally formed and serves me now only as a name under which I diffuse certain ideas. He is almost always kind to me, but never or seldom confidential, which in fact he scarcely knows how to be; birth indeed is necessary for that. He could do much more if he had military notions, and if his hot temper allowed him in general to form and keep before him comprehensive views. But this he does not and cannot. He knows how to be stern and underrates tranquil powers and virtues. But after all he is very much to be praised. By the way, the old Stein loves and esteems you very much, if we may trust his expressions. How can he help it? This is for your information.

Arndt and Niebuhr seem here to agree that there was something cold and unsympathetic in Stein's manners. And indeed, if we compare his letters with Niebuhr's, or with Arndt's writings, we shall not be surprised that they should think so. The fashion of that age and country was extremely emotional; even the Germans of the present day are astonished and amused at the effusiveness and ostentatious display of sentiment of their fathers. Stein is in the other extreme. He is never to be found chatting or unbosoming himself; the reticent measured language of authority is quite natural to him. Perhaps, however, we ought not to apply the same standard to the ruler that we apply to the literary man or poet. On further reflexion Arndt

himself judged so. He says, by way of explaining the discrepancy between the estimate of Stein presented in this letter and that which he gave afterwards, that he did not become really familiar with him till the Armistice; that at Dresden, and before, in St Petersburg and Königsberg, he had had for the most part only short interviews with him. It is to be observed that he never changed his mind so far as to represent Stein as in the least a sentimentalist; but he did come to recognize a real, and at times a fascinating amiableness under his despotic exterior.

Moreover, Arndt retracts on fuller knowledge his opinion that Stein had no judgment in military affairs. He explains that it was founded entirely on the fact that Stein did not immediately call out and arm the Saxon population, and that he had come to understand later that for this Stein was not at all responsible.

If Stein was reticent in friendship, he was also not fond of talking of his discomforts and annoyances. His letters written during the armistice bear few traces of the irritation which consumed him. His correspondents are principally Count Münster and Frau vom Stein. The former writes from London on June 6: 'Would your Excellency believe it that Wessenberg has not received a line from Count Metternich since April 10th? (Wessenberg was the Austrian Ambassador to England, whose mission was the first step taken by Austria in disengaging herself from the French alliance, and this statement marks strikingly the indecision of Metternich's mind.) Stadion (Austrian Ambassador at

Reichenbach) will certainly do what he can. He deserves to be named by Bonaparte along with Stein, Kotzebue, and the Cossacks. I see from the bitter tone of your letter that your Excellency does not count me worthy to join that confraternity.' He then explains his conduct in the affair which had given offence to Stein, and adds, 'I think now that I have defended myself against all the attacks your Excellency makes on me. From old acquaintance I know that there is no harm in them. Not for me but for others, for Sweden, and even for the unhappy German princes I plead for the *suaviter in modo*.' Stein's answer to this is:

Your Excellency says *suaviter in modo* with the German princes! What do you say then to the conduct of the wretches—I enclose a paper on that of the King of Saxony, whom Napoleon affronts and humiliates in every way, because he takes him for a secret betrayer of his cause, and so he compels him for example to be present at the performance of indecent plays and to join in the laughter—and then the poor oaf must have his confessor come and absolve him before he goes to bed! And yet he thinks Napoleon a man sent from God! These small tyrants revel in their sovereignty and in the enjoyment of their plunder, and are indifferent to the sufferings and shame of their country.

To his wife he writes on the 18th:

We lead a monotonous life here. The Emperor is gone to Opotschna to meet the Grand Princesses—I am sure the meeting will do good! Little N(esselrode?) accompanies him; a poor little cipher, 500,000 fathoms beneath his position....I have visited Blücher in his head-quarters at Strehlen; he is in good health, his wound almost healed; he talks of nothing but battles and fighting.

But what of the other General who had also been wounded at Gross-Görschen? Stein writes

on the 22nd, 'I thank you, my dear, for sending precise information about Scharnhorst's health; I hope he will recover from his wound and illness, for his presence is extremely beneficial,—he has a just, tranquil, conciliatory mind, and a pure and noble character, which have gained him great confidence from the King and the Russian Generals, which no one can replace.' But on the 28th he writes, 'The particulars of poor Scharnhorst's state of health which Lieutenant-Colonel Grolmann brought us from Prag are very disturbing;' and then he repeats almost the same panegyric, but with an ominous change of tense, 'He *had* a just understanding,' &c. In the same letter he mentions one of our old friends: 'I have seen Gessler here again; he is more hypochondriacal and more keen than ever.' On July 2nd, 'The particulars about Scharnhorst's death, which your last contained, are very disturbing; I have lost in him an honest friend, who was *much attached to me* (der sehr an mir hing).' This expression drops out as it were accidentally, and is not repeated elsewhere; it is confirmed by other traditions, and seems to me important evidence of Scharnhorst's feeling for Stein, for Stein is by no means, like Schön, one who supposed everybody to be devoted to him. It will be seen that Scharnhorst survived his wound almost two months; he died not so much of the wound itself as of the labours which he imposed upon himself before he was recovered from it. On the 16th Stein sends presents to his daughters, and adds, in allusion to the Congress of Prag, which had now begun, and to W. v. Humboldt, the Prussian plenipotentiary, who saw much

of the Stein family at this time, 'You find yourself now in the centre of affairs; I fancy you will not get much better information on that account. I hope you will take care to meet no one of the French Embassy, and that you will avoid them completely. I enclose an elegy on our gallant Scharnhorst's death, and a little work on the Education of Princes, by Arndt, both full of fine and great thoughts—distribute them among your friends.' On the 19th we read, 'Wellington's brilliant victory fills us with joy; we have here a courier from London of July 3rd, who brings me a letter from Münster, according to which Joseph and Jourdan are beaten, and their armies utterly destroyed, 10,000 prisoners, 150 guns, and 500 baggage-waggons taken. Long live the Marquis of Wellington! Pray buy A. W. Schlegel on Dramatic Art and Literature, Vienna, 1809, and give it Henrietta to read, to form her taste for dramatic literature.' And on August 3rd, 'The Austrians here are not so shy of me as they are of you in Prag; I see Stadion and his people a good deal.'

To Count Münster on July 17th he writes:

Chancellor Hardenberg's bearing is very staunch in foreign affairs, but his management of the interior is utterly feeble and confused. Our good Nesselrode has convinced himself too late that Metternich is superficial, immoral, and double-minded; from his conduct he must either be a traitor, or, what is more probable, he has not the force and the influence grounded on personal reputation to guide and control his Emperor. Austria's participation in the war is still unsettled and doubtful; no clear result has yet been reached by all the negotiations since November, and her policy sets at defiance all the counsels of human intelligence.

We may apply to Metternich what Mephistopheles says in Doctor Faust:

> The fellow that 'finesses'[1]
> Is like a creature that some spirit malign
> Draws round and round in barren wildernesses,
> And all about lie fruitful pastures green.

Schön, writing of Stein as he was at the moment that he wrote this, has the courage to say, 'Stein and Pozzo di Borgo were much alike in this, that they rated clever cunning very high, ay, higher than anything else!'

Meanwhile Stein's relations with Niebuhr grew more and more uncomfortable. Our only formal account of the quarrel comes from Niebuhr; on Stein's behalf no explanation has been given. In a letter to Princess Louise, dated July 12th, Niebuhr writes, after a description of the general state of affairs conceived in his usual melancholy spirit:

> No man ought to feel the deep melancholy which arises from a survey of our misfortunes more than Stein; he seems to ward it off by abandoning himself to outbreaks of caprice and passion against those who feel it as he ought to do! Not a shadow now really remains of the old ties that bound me to him; no continuous conversation; one must avoid the subjects which have the best right to occupy us if one would not draw upon oneself attacks which, always absurd, would be intolerable to anyone who had not once loved him. What principally embarrasses me is just that I should be much more at ease if an actual breach took place. One cannot make a remark but he instantly contradicts it, and he does so always in the most unbecoming way, as if one were talking nonsense. I could never have believed before that the time would come when I should be glad to find him not at home when I visited him. Still I have enough tenderness for him left to be always touched if I find him quiet

[1] Of course in the original it is 'speculates'.

and ready for a conversation which may remind me ever so little of the good old time, and I shall go on tolerating him because at the bottom of his heart he carries wounds of fate which he tries to hide from himself; it is just this discord within that makes him insufferable. Moreover, he has changed his views very much about many persons and things; at Dresden he wrote me a most insulting letter, because I ventured to throw doubt upon the uprightness of an individual of whom he now speaks with the greatest contempt. I should not have written about all this to your Royal Highness if I had to entrust the letter to the post, which is extremely open to suspicion. For with the Minister who abandons us to the consequences of his incapacity and indolence and the crimes of the wretches who surround him, the only department of affairs which is vigorously conducted is watching the persons who have been led to hold him in contempt.

What are the precise charges brought against Stein in this letter? First that he was very irritable. It is plain enough from Arndt's description that this was true. Arndt says that his 'impatient temper at this time allowed him few intervals of brightness or sweetness.' He gives a specimen of his manner, adding, however, that never on any other occasion was he positively rude to him.

One morning I came early, about 6—he rose very early—with a paper in my hand and found his carriage with two horses and a postilion standing before the door. I went as usual without ceremony up stairs and handed him the paper. 'Why do you come troubling me at this hour? I have no time; off with you; the rubbish can wait.' I went away saying, 'Your Excellency ordered me to have the rubbish ready quickly. You said, "As quick as you possibly can."' I went downstairs, and Niebuhr whom I found with him followed me at once with his cheeks all red, comforting me with the words, 'He has been rude to me too!'

Arndt adds, however, that a day or two afterwards when he saw Stein again,

Stein asked for the rubbish and said, 'You know me; I was plagued with gout the day before yesterday, and with the complaint that we all suffer from now. I had to see the Czar and the Kings, and Hardenberg and Metternich.' And thereupon he stroked my cheek in a friendly way. It was his kind of caress; when good will overflowed his heart most abundantly he would kiss you, pulling your head towards him, on the forehead.

Thus Arndt too found Stein irritable; but what a different appearance the fact wears in his description! We have to ask, In those altercations which Niebuhr describes was Stein alone irritable or was he irritable unprovoked? Impartial observers thought Niebuhr's temper the worse of the two. The excitement of that crisis, 'the complaint from which we all suffer,' would affect him as well as Stein, not to speak of personal discomforts—for he was wretchedly lodged and was a man who was strongly affected by such matters. The furious tirade against Hardenberg, with which the above letter closes, is a specimen of the tone of his conversation at the time. It is easy to imagine that Niebuhr's conversation seemed as perverse and as irritable to Stein as Stein's appeared to him; and this indeed is precisely the remark which Arndt makes. He says, 'Schön and Niebuhr held together, and among them there was a regular wasps' nest. They held together often also in their judgments and remarks on Stein, which were not always mild, *but then Stein's remarks on them were not always so either.*'

It has been generally supposed that the ground of quarrel was Stein's relation to Russia, and this may have been partly so in the case of Schön. But Niebuhr was not a member of the Central Administration, and he does not point at any such explana-

tion of the misunderstanding. A comparison of his letter to the Princess Louise with his letter, above quoted, to Arndt, leads me to think that the subject of dispute was different. Niebuhr and Schön had had a difference with Stein in 1810 on the character of Hardenberg, and this question had been reopened in April, when Stein gave offence to Niebuhr by trusting a paper of his composition to Hardenberg. We saw how deeply hurt Niebuhr was, and his reference in his second letter to Stein's insulting answer to imputations cast by him on the uprightness of an individual of whom Stein now spoke with the greatest contempt, leads us to imagine that Stein had resented one of those outrageous invectives against Hardenberg which Niebuhr was in the habit of penning. Niebuhr was one of those who cannot let the tares grow with the wheat; the Chancellor's licentious life seems to have revolted him so much that he could not endure that his friends should have anything to do with him; and accordingly one of the reasons he gives for determining to tolerate Stein a little longer is that his views have altered, and that he now speaks of Hardenberg with the greatest contempt. It was natural that Schön and Niebuhr should hold together on this subject now, for they had done the same in 1810, and Schön inserts just at this point in his autobiography a description of Hardenberg's disreputable house-keeping at Reichenbach, remarking expressly that it gave particular offence to Niebuhr. But Hardenberg had merit as a public man, and was really indispensable at this time. What other adviser of equal capacity had ever enjoyed such secure favour with the King?

Stein assuredly cannot be charged with judging him too leniently, either in his public or in his private character. But it is easy to imagine from what we know of Niebuhr's disposition that he could not pardon the necessary tolerance and forbearance which Stein, as a practical man and one who had been in public life through the whole scandalous reign of Frederick William II., exercised towards Hardenberg.

Another charge which this letter brings against Stein seems to me highly characteristic of Niebuhr; he accuses Stein of not feeling the misfortunes of the State as he ought. Such callousness would certainly be culpable, but at the same time incomprehensible, since those misfortunes had affected Stein personally much more than Niebuhr. This strikes Niebuhr, and so he explains that Stein by a deliberate effort shakes off the feeling which might otherwise have become overpowering to him. According to Niebuhr it is *wrong* to do this. I should say it is not only right, but in the circumstances of that time it was a duty, and if Niebuhr did not do it I can understand that he must have been insufferable as a companion. In that extreme crisis it was surely the first duty of a man to avert his eyes from whatever was gloomy in the prospect, to hope against hope, and to husband the nervous power which was so heavily taxed. But to Niebuhr the assumed insensibility which is so necessary for action in dangerous crises is incomprehensible and indistinguishable from an unnatural callousness. When we perceive this I think we may easily understand the whole quarrel. Two men, both naturally irritable, are thrown together at a

most critical moment. Both are aware of the danger that threatens, but the one has an ardent, active, heroic temperament, the other a querulous, melancholic sensibility. The one stifles his anxieties as much as he can, thinks it a kind of treason to speak of them, and is nettled when he hears others speak of them needlessly; the other thinks it equally a duty to enlarge on them, and is shocked that any one should be reticent on the melancholy subject, or should affect in any way to make light of it, or should dare for a moment to be cheerful. Any dramatist who should bring together two such characters in such circumstances, would see the necessity of ending the scene with a quarrel.

The other scholar-statesman crosses the scene in Arndt's narrative just at this moment, and, as ever, shows when compared with Niebuhr the difference between a healthy character and a morbid one. 'W. v. Humboldt,' says Arndt, 'lately ambassador at Vienna, had won upon Stein so by his unique and singular clearness, intellectuality, and serenity, that he could lead him about like a lamb.'

Arndt adds an observation on this quarrel which, from the last sentence in the above quotation from Niebuhr's letter to him is, I fear, true. 'Stein had been by his pedigree an Imperial Knight, and had in consequence a somewhat which, with all his true-heartedness, plainness, and fine Christian and German sympathy with all people, never quite disappeared. For my part I was never troubled by it, but Schön and Niebuhr, both *homines novi* or *novissimi*, were hurt by it at times, and often complained of it bitterly.'

Niebuhr clung as long as he could to his intention of tolerating Stein, but at last he gave it up. He wrote to the Princess from Prag in October, 'As to Stein, I reserve my information till we meet; for I flatter myself soon to bring to an end my dreary and useless stay in this place, and to return to Berlin. We do not see each other any longer; it was the gentlest way of dissolving a relation which he had succeeded in making unendurable.' The breach thus made was not repaired for seven years, but we shall find them reunited in Stein's old age, and shall have other occasions of observing that difference in their characters which rendered their friendship, though founded on real mutual regard, too frail to stand the trial of close companionship in anxious times.

Long after both were dead, Dahlmann, speaking in the Frankfurt Parliament, told a story which shows that Niebuhr always retained his admiration for Stein. 'Long ago,' he said, 'I talked with a great man now dead—why should I not name him?—I talked with Niebuhr about the earlier days of the Prussian State, and particularly the years which followed the War of Liberation. And as I spoke to him of Stein and of his substantial and central greatness in comparison with the elegant superficiality of Prince Hardenberg, Niebuhr agreed with me and added, the special characteristic of the man was, that if he pitched you downstairs one day he let you climb up again through the window the next.'

Schön retired about this time. He does not seem to have actually resigned his seat in the Central Administration, but according to him the battles of

Gross-Görschen and Bautzen, followed by the Armistice and Austria's adhesion to the Alliance, brought that institution to an end. We shall see that it was revived later. In the meantime Schön had returned to Gumbinnen. He tells us that he might have entered Hardenberg's bureau had he not disliked so much the society which surrounded him, and feared to sacrifice his individuality. Accordingly, in an understanding with his friend Niebuhr, he determined to retire, saying with Cato,

> When vice prevails and wicked men bear sway
> The post of honour is a private station.

His narrative of this period reflects very plainly the excited feelings in which it was passed. It is full of angry attacks upon Stein, so vague for the most part that no precise charge can be extracted from them. One statement however is curious. 'His unrest expressed itself in violent utterances against individuals, and in charging the want of enthusiasm among the Germans upon the Reformation, and growing very angry with Luther. His ill-humour was increased when writers described him as a Liberal, and Austria regarded him with disfavour. The Russian Emperor visibly shrank from him on this account. This annoyed him to such an extent that for some days Niebuhr and I fancied he would become a Catholic.' According to Arndt he was more likely to become a Moravian. 'Two or three times,' writes Arndt, 'it happened that the two really religious men among us, Stein and Gessler, drove over on Sunday to Zinzendorf's settlement of Gnadenfrei, which was near, for the service. On this

Schön commented: 'The two old father Confessors fancy they can pray down those devils Napoleon, Metternich, and Hardenberg with penitential psalms.' We have learnt before that Luther, along with Charles the Great, was Stein's special hero in German history, but there is a certain probability that he may have flung out now and then an impatient word against the cold Protestantism of North Germany, which was incapable of inspiring the nation with heroism in the conflict for national independence. Catholicism had done this for the Spaniards in 1808; the Greek Church had done it for Russia in 1812. But where Protestantism reigned it had long seemed as if nothing could rouse the people from their sloth, and though Prussia, under the influence partly of religion, partly of half-formed philosophies which had not yet attained to be called religion, was even then disproving his assertion, yet this experience was still new, and Stein was not quite so well placed for observing it as were some others.

An affair which principally occupied Stein during the armistice—indeed it was this which brought him and Niebuhr together—was the negotiation of the Subsidy Treaty with England. This was concluded on June 14th. Both Stein and Hardenberg were a good deal annoyed by the conduct of the English representatives, Lord Cathcart, of whom we know Stein's opinion, and Sir Charles Stewart, Lord Castlereagh's brother, who had lately been sent out. The latter seems personally to have created a very favourable impression, but he was much more of a soldier than of a diplomatist, and this was one of the faults of Lord Cathcart also.

Stein complains peevishly that England has sent two representatives who 'seem to think they perform their duties best by galloping about with the armies.' In the negotiations themselves he complained that they seemed to think of the interests, not of Europe, nor of England, but of Hannover, and he notes in his autobiography that 'at this moment of extreme crisis the English Ambassador came forward with claims on the part of Hannover to an aggrandisement to be guaranteed against the coming peace.' He seems to have naturally thought that this conduct would raise a flame in Parliament, but I suppose in those Tory times, and in the general ignorance about Germany, it passed unnoticed. The relations of England and Hannover, while they had the same ruler, were always unsatisfactory. The small state had always either more or less than its rights. In 1803 it had suffered invasion purely on account of its connexion with England, and now, not by way of compensation, but because England happened to be inattentive, it used the power of its mighty yoke-fellow for its own purposes. Just at this time it had active politicians in Münster and Ompteda, and the following passage in a report of the latter to the former will be read with some surprise.

Sir Charles Stewart has had the goodness to communicate to me at Dresden what passed at a Conference which took place between himself, the Chancellor Baron v. Hardenberg, Count Nesselrode and the Baron vom Stein.

I pass over the arguments which the Baron vom Stein used on this occasion, which he has often repeated to me and which are known to your Excellency. He was persuaded that the difficulties raised to the conclusion of the Subsidy Treaty on the ground

of the interests of the House of Hannover would blow up (feraient sauter), as he said, the whole English Ministry. Sir Charles Stewart had answered him *with great firmness* that he was not sent either by the English nation or by the Parliament, but that he had been accredited to the King of Prussia by his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. I must do Sir Charles the justice to say in general that in this negotiation he has displayed *all the firmness which was compatible with the interests of the general cause.*

Ompteda might well say so from his point of view, for Sir Charles laid it down that

The views of the Prince Regent were founded only on the desire of Great Britain to assure to herself for the future a more durable state of things with respect *to her electoral States.* An arrangement to which Prussia would accede, guaranteed by His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, and which would provide a convenient enlargement of the Electorate of Hannover by means of the territories of Hildesheim, Minden and Ravensberg, *this is all that Great Britain desires.* It is to be hoped that, considering the enormous sacrifices which Great Britain has made for the common cause, this object so interesting in the eyes of the Prince Regent will not meet with any hindrances on the part of Prussia.

But of course the urgent question was the course which would be taken by Austria. Never did the destinies of Europe lie more absolutely in the hands of this Power. On June 27th a Treaty was signed at Reichenbach, by which Austria engaged as Mediating Power, formally to offer conditions of peace to Napoleon, and to declare war against him in case of his refusal. The conditions of peace which Austria proceeded to offer were cession on the part of Napoleon of the Duchy of Warsaw, the Hanseatic Towns, the Districts in North Germany which composed the 32nd Military Division of the French Empire, and the Illyrian Provinces with Trieste. Not even the dissolution of the Confedera-

tion of the Rhine was demanded, though it was referred to as desirable. Jerome was to be left in Westphalia, and the young Louis Napoleon (the elder brother, who died in 1831, of Napoleon III.) in the Grand Duchy of Berg. All the sacrifices which had been made were to have no greater results, all the enthusiasm which so slowly and yet at last so powerfully had burst into flame was to subside again *pulveris exigui jactu.* Napoleon was to be left Sovereign of France, Belgium, Holland and Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, with a brother and a nephew ruling over territory which had once belonged to Prussia and Hessen, and with a son who called the Emperor of Austria grandfather. And these terms Prussia and Russia had now bound themselves to accept. Such was the crisis which made Stein irritable. Only one man could now save the world from Napoleon, and that was Napoleon himself. Fortunately he did it.

It may seem as if the indolent method of explaining actions by intoxication or infatuation, which has been so extensively applied to the history of Napoleon, was more excusable at this point of it than at any other. Why could he not, it may be asked, dissolve this Coalition as he had dissolved so many others? There seemed to be room here too for the old trick of tempting each member of it to a separate Peace. Each was exposed to strong temptation; Russia was fighting for no palpable interest of her own, and a Peace Party might be created in her head-quarters as after Friedland; Austria too desired peace, and though she had resolved not to allow Napoleon to bribe her with the spoils of

Prussia, yet could not desire the revival of Prussia in her former greatness. Or indeed, was there any occasion to resort to devices of this kind? Why not accept Austria's terms frankly? Peace would then be given to the Continent; the immense superiority of the French Empire to all other Powers would remain; and the impression produced by the Russian disaster would have been partly effaced by the victories of Gross-Görschen and Bautzen. On the other hand, must not Napoleon have known better than any one else that he could no longer reckon upon an inexhaustible fund of military strength? The prodigious sacrifices he had demanded from France had been hitherto repaid by victory; they were not, as in the Prussia of Frederick, demanded by the nature and needs of the country. How was it possible to go on exacting them when no French interest required it, after such a disaster as that of 1812?

Yet he does not seem to have thought seriously of peace, nor did he make any serious attempt to gain Austria. As we saw that in the first months of the year he expected Prussia to stand by him, yet never dreamed of purchasing her fidelity by any concessions, so now he loses Austria by the same conduct. The terms she offered showed that she did not wish for war, and he seems to have been firmly convinced that she would not fight. And indeed it seems that very slight concessions would have satisfied her. But to allow the settlement of Europe to be made entirely without her would evidently be political ruin to a state whose influence had depended entirely upon her very peculiar rela-

tion to the Germanic and European system. And if she was to take a part, how could she hesitate between the Allies, who treated her with the most flattering deference, and whose success could scarcely be dangerous to her, and Napoleon, whose power was dangerous to every state, and who even in his disasters never gave her a civil word? We generally find on examining Napoleon's actions closely that the appearance of infatuation disappears, but in this case good judges who watched him closely at the time charge him with it. Gentz, for instance, who was at Metternich's right hand throughout the negotiations, speaks of Napoleon's 'unheard-of and inexplicable conduct,' and he frequently repeats that it can only be accounted for by supposing that Napoleon did not seriously believe that Austria would fight.

Again he says, 'Bonaparte's most mortal enemy could not have shown him a way more calculated to force the Austrian Cabinet to a decision than that which he has followed for the last three or four weeks.'

Caulaincourt also, who was sent by Napoleon to the Congress which, merely for form's sake, now met at Prag, declared more than once that if he were the Emperor Napoleon the propositions of Austria would be accepted at once, but that 'he did not think it possible that they should be accepted by the man with whom we have to do.' At another time he said that 'this man was placed in a position so false and so critical that it was difficult to conjecture at what corner he would make his escape.' Fouché made a similar remark. Opinions like these seem to re-

lieve us from the obligation to find rational motives for Napoleon's conduct; still it is to be observed that Caulaincourt does not think of him as blinded, but rather as forced to a desperate course by the necessity of his position. Perhaps we overlook, as Napoleon could not overlook, the public opinion of France. This had lain for many years in a manner dormant, but Napoleon well knew what would bring that sleep to an end. So long as war continued he felt safe, because he was evidently indispensable to France. But perhaps he felt that after the Russian disaster he could never dare to be at peace again. When once 'he was returned, and that war-thoughts had left their places vacant,' would not the French people ask him what had become of half a million of their sons and brothers who had left them in the spring of 1812 and had never returned? Meanwhile in war there were always favourable chances, particularly so long as his enemies could scarcely themselves believe in the possibility of defeating him.

He made a journey to Mainz, where he met Marie Louise. The sight of his army, which passed before his eyes as he travelled, confirmed his confidence. He returned to Dresden on August 5th, and in five days the armistice was to run out. On the 8th Austria prepared an Ultimatum, by which indeed the Allies would not be bound, but the acceptance of which would have determined Austria to neutrality. In this Ultimatum appeared the condition that Napoleon should resign the Protectorate of the Confederation of the Rhine. Napoleon gave no answer, and the armistice ran out.

CHAPTER VI.

LIBERATION.

GERMANY had long been regarded as consisting of three parts, Austria, Prussia, and the mass of minor states which taken altogether were commonly spoken of as the Empire. Since the campaign of Austerlitz this third part had become French under the name of the Confederation of the Rhine, and it had also been greatly increased relatively to the other two parts by the establishment of the Kingdom of Westphalia at the expense of Prussia, and by the aggrandisement of Bavaria at the expense of Austria. All this Napoleon still retained when the war began again in August, 1813. He was not a French Prince maintaining himself by means of French troops, but the Head of a German Confederation much larger in territory and population than either Prussia or Austria. His disadvantage now consisted in the fact that Russia, Austria and Prussia were united against him for the first time; but on the other hand the states now called Austria and Prussia were very much smaller and feebler than the states

which had borne those names when he waged war with them before.

In the process of Napoleon's downfall we now reach the third stage. He had lost Prussia's alliance in the first months of the year and Austria's in the Armistice. The next three months of the same wonderful year witnessed the dissolution of that third Germanic Power of which he had the Protectorate, and his own expulsion from Germany. The principal occurrences of this period are Napoleon's last great success at Dresden on August 27th; then closely following it a series of disasters, Grossbeeren, Hagelberg, Katzbach, Kulm, Nollendorff, Dennewitz, crowded into the days between August 23rd and September 6th; the strengthening of the Coalition by the Treaties of Töplitz on September 9th; next the defection of Bavaria, the principal state of the Confederation of the Rhine, by the Treaty of Ried, October 8th; the overthrow of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia, chiefly by the Russian troops of Czernitcheff; the conquest of Saxony and overthrow of Napoleon's army by the battles of Leipzig. What will chiefly concern us, occupied as we are less with military affairs and the fortunes of Napoleon than with the political history of Germany and Stein's influence upon it, will be the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, and the circumstances attending it by which the foundation of the modern Germanic system was laid.

Of the campaign itself we shall have so little to say that we may as well dismiss it at once after inserting the terse sentences which Stein devotes to it in his autobiography:

In the Austrian Monarchy (he says) all the military measures were done to order; they did not flow from any national feeling, for no appeal had been made, as in 1809, to the feelings but only to the sense of duty, and this was the answer my friends there made when I charged them with their coldness and scruples and the difference of their present behaviour and their past. Instead of setting, as they did then, the great landowners at the head of the battalions of Landwehr, it was proposed to form them into two or three squadrons, as an Imperial Guard, a senseless and discreditable force. In the army there was little confidence, little satisfaction with the war, and hence the first attempt near Dresden succeeded ill; it was ill planned, came too late, and was ingloriously executed, 15,000 Austrians surrendering under General Menzaros. The victories at Kulm, Katzbach and Dennewitz restored our courage and confidence. The head-quarters were at Töplitz, and the neighbouring passes into Bohemia were occupied by the combined armies, and here in September the alliances between Austria, Russia, Prussia and Great Britain were concluded.

Stein left Reichenbach at the end of the Armistice and went to Prag, where he remained till late in September, with the exception of some days which he spent at Töplitz. We hear scarcely anything of him during the rest of the month of August; the only letter of his written in this period contains, as might be expected, reflexions on the dangers to be expected from Austrian influence:

Metternich is a man who shrinks from every vigorous measure, sets his goal near, and concerns himself with contemptible patchwork; hence the adulterous marriage, the foolish hope of a partial peace, the childish Congress, the miserable Ultimatum, &c. But at this moment Metternich enjoys an ascendancy in our Councils, on account of the Emperor Alexander's delight at the accession of Austria and his hope by that means to bring the war to an honourable conclusion, and through the weak devotion of Nesselrode—an ascendancy which assuredly the man will not use for the happiness of Germany, and which must be watched and restrained.

It is not till the dangerous crisis of the war was over, and the disaster of Dresden, which is thought to have shaken the fidelity of Austria, had been effaced by the victories which immediately followed, that Stein begins to be active again.

The difficult question of the future constitution of Germany could no longer be adjourned, now that there was an immediate prospect of dissolving the Confederation of the Rhine, and we shall see that in a few days from this time a measure was adopted which irrevocably determined what in the main that constitution should be. This is, therefore, the place to introduce a subject which will soon interest us more than any other.

The storms of the Napoleonic period had at once increased the desire of the Germans for union, by quickening the instinct of nationality, and increased considerably the difficulty of realising this desire. Now that Stein was obliged to admit that his original scheme of dividing Germany between Prussia and Austria was impracticable, he began to feel more strongly than ever the seriousness of the obstacle which Napoleon had set up, 'the wedge,' as we said above, 'which he had driven into the heart of Germany,' and to apprehend that the fall of the tyrant, instead of giving happiness to the Germans, might pave the way to a new state of things even worse and less endurable than the chaos of the old Empire. What was this obstacle? What was this wedge? It was the absolute internal sovereignty which Napoleon had given to the Kings he had created in Germany. How this operated to make any new union of Germany seem almost hopeless I

cannot better explain than by quoting an account which Count Hardenberg (the Chancellor's cousin) gave to Count Münster of the views of Metternich, in a letter dated October 12th:

As to the rest of Germany (he writes), Count Metternich fears that in trying just now to restrain by positive laws the sovereignty which its Princes have at least believed themselves to enjoy under the protection of France—and this applies especially to the South of Germany—we should only turn them into secret friends of France, always ready to shake off the yoke, if indeed we wished and were able to impose such a yoke on them at this moment, a yoke which would seem to them more burdensome than that from which we offer to emancipate them. It is indeed not doubtful that the protection of France would be essentially more burdensome to them than the just laws and the sovereignty of a constitutional Emperor; nevertheless they considered themselves, and they actually were, sovereign at home, and this reconciled them to the yoke which Napoleon laid on them; they yielded with resignation to a superior force which nothing could resist, in the hope that such a state of things could not endure, and that they should afterwards recover the unrestrained exercise of their sovereignty acquired under the protection of France; and Count Metternich is convinced that rather than witness the downfall of this ambitious fabric, which has cost them so many sacrifices alike physical and moral, the said Princes would choose to incur again all possible risks by the side of the founder of their sovereignty.

This passage exhibits the difficulty of extinguishing the Napoleonic Sovereignty after it had once taken root. Now let us hear Stein explain the mischiefs which would follow from allowing it to continue. I quote from a memoir not given in Pertz[1], which he seems to have written at Prag in the last days of August.

[1] It is given in Ompteda (III. p. 224).

There can be no greater earthly interest than that we discuss. Fifteen millions of educated, virtuous people, estimable by their gifts and the degree of developement they have reached, and who are closely connected with two other great States by frontiers, language and an inner indestructible instinct of nationality. The subject of discussion is thus important, the moment is critical, this and future generations will judge severely those who, called by their position in life to solve the problem, do not devote all their powers and attention to it.

The old constitution of Germany guaranteed to each of its inhabitants security of person and property; in the great closed countries (territoriis clausis) both were assured by Estates and the constitution of the Law Courts, in the others by the Imperial Courts and by the oversight of the Emperor. The arbitrary power of the Princes was thoroughly held in check in respect of the levying of taxes and of their procedure against the person of the subject. All these bulwarks are now removed, fifteen millions of Germans are given over to the caprice of thirty-six small despots, and one needs only trace the history of the public administration in Bavaria, Würtemberg and Westphalia to convince oneself that the rage for innovation, insane arrogance, unrestrained prodigality and brutal lust have succeeded in destroying in every way the happiness of the unfortunate inhabitants of countries once so prosperous.

The consequences of such a state of things grow more and more mischievous. If the old subdivision of Germany destroyed in its inhabitants the feeling of nationality and weakened that of independence, if it produced a narrowness of view and a want of public spirit, still they retained, living under the protection of the laws, morality and a sense of personal dignity. But both will soon perish in these petty despotisms where the subject is exposed to the caprice of the Ruler and of his favourites and is hopelessly ruined as soon as he ventures in the least to throw off his fetters and to lift himself up. And thus if the present subdivision should be ratified by a future Treaty of Peace, the German will become gradually worse, more cringing, meaner, and the estrangement of the different territories from each other will increase with every year.

Moreover, even if the Confederation of the Rhine should be formally dissolved, the preponderating influence of France upon

Germany will be perpetuated by the maintenance of these petty despotisms. For several of these small Sovereigns, as Baden, Würtemberg, Darmstadt, &c., are near neighbours to France and fettered to her by fear. Those which lie further back, as Bavaria and Saxony, are led by jealousy against their more powerful neighbours to regard France as their protector, which by the superior adroitness of its diplomatic agents, by the connexions it has by this time established, and by apparent advantages which it will be able momentarily to offer, can maintain a degree of influence which for various reasons will be unattainable to the other Powers.

These are the two sides of the formidable problem, of which neither Stein nor Metternich seems to see more than one. What impresses Metternich is that these petty despotisms *cannot* be abolished, for if they are assailed they will rally desperately round France, while it does not occur to Stein even to discuss this question. He only sees that they *must* be abolished, since otherwise they will ruin Germany, but to this Metternich in his turn is blind.

Stein does not abandon his opinion that a division of Germany into two great Federal States, under the leadership of Prussia and Austria, would be the best arrangement. At the same time he expresses his doubt whether this proposal will find acceptance by asking the question, 'But how far is this in accordance with the wishes of the Allies?' How this proposal was now generally regarded we learn from Count Hardenberg:

Your Excellency knows the project of the Baron vom Stein and his favourite idea of separating North Germany from South, as well as the disposition which the Court of Berlin has always had to bring about at least in fact such a separation. Hitherto

the decided repugnance which the Emperor of Austria has manifested towards resuming the crown of Germany and still more towards acquiescing in such a division of authority, has hindered the Baron vom Stein and the supporters of his system from putting forward these ideas publicly; but since the Prussian armies have played so glorious and brilliant a part, which certainly gives them the position of honour in the war for the deliverance of Europe, we begin to hear speak with less reserve of a right thus acquired by Prussia to share the Empire of Germany with Austria, and even to take her place if she should persist in denying this right. Never will Austria consent either to the one or the other of these plans; but seeing that she would not be able to oppose them openly without quarrelling with Prussia, if once it were decided that the Empire of Germany must have a constitution and a head, it is perhaps not altogether impolitic to get rid at once of this prior question so as to avoid being compelled in the sequel to deal with the other which concerns the form of government to be given to Germany—they are questions which certainly would revive all the former misunderstandings, which by disuniting the forces of the Empire have perhaps principally contributed to its destruction.

We thus see that the problem, in itself one of the most intricate that could be proposed, was complicated further by jealousies and prejudices. The scheme of division was not rejected purely on its merits, but because Austria was likely, and particularly so after Prussia had covered herself with glory in the battles of the latter half of August, to lose too much. At the same time both Metternich and the Emperor of Austria were agreed in thinking it not desirable that the Emperor should resume the crown of Germany, and this resolution placed an insurmountable obstacle in the way of a restoration of the old constitution. They believed that with the old constitution would revive the old rivalry of Prussia, from which they now felt them-

selves for the time free, and also that the imperial dignity, which had carried no real power, and which Joseph had regarded as an encumbrance, was not worth reviving in its old form, and that the attempt to clothe it with substantial authority would excite immediate and persistent opposition. These two plans then being rejected, what did Metternich propose to substitute for them? Count Hardenberg answers that he does not find it easy to say. Metternich, in fact, could not see his way to anything more definite than a system of alliances, which should give the different German states some sort of security against the foreigner. But Metternich could not thus wash his hands of the German question without conceding to the Princes of the Confederation their Napoleonic sovereignty. If they were to be regarded as foreign Powers the right of settling their own internal affairs must be granted them. And when once Metternich had come to think of this as admissible he perceived that Austria might find her advantage in it. By guaranteeing their sovereignty to these Princes she might succeed at least to a part of the power which Napoleon had acquired by first conferring it. She might in this way create an Austrian party in Germany, and set up a dyke against the revolutionary spirit, which she considered to be fostered by Stein's schemes and by the Prussian appeal to the people. And lastly, she might do this in such a way as to confer at the same time a great service upon the common cause. Prussia's successes in the field would almost be counterbalanced if Austria by offering this timely bribe could bring over to the Allies some of the leading Princes of the Confedera-

tion, whose confidence in Napoleon's fortune already began to waver. Considering the immense importance of this turn in German politics, we will make room for another extract from Count Hardenberg's important letter:

Count Metternich does not fail to comprehend the uncertainty which, in the absence of positive laws and a chief to watch over them and without the possibility of providing any substitutes for them, would rest upon the union of Germany against a foreign enemy, nor does he conceal from himself that the Princes in their weakness may be tempted in certain cases even to seek a foreign support, but he can discover no remedy for this evil in a constitution which, as he believes himself to have proved, would cause divisions from the outset and discontents in the sequel, while the executive Power would have no means of repression if not that, the too frequent use of which is objectionable, namely, military force. As to the burden which might oppress the unfortunate subjects of so many petty princes clinging jealously to the unreserved possession of their rights of sovereignty, Count Metternich is not insensible to it, but it being admitted once for all that the reconstruction of a Germanic Constitution would have insurmountable difficulties or at least great inconveniences of another kind, he sees no other remedy for this evil but that which applies to every kind of tyranny and alone restrains it in other despotic Governments, the fear of an open opposition to the will of a Sovereign who governs without justice or equity. The argument drawn from the consideration that an improved condition rather than a condition of enslavement should be displayed to a nation which is to be called on to break its chains, cannot produce much effect on the Minister of a Court which is alarmed at the very idea of putting the people in motion and setting the Governments on one side. It is in accordance with this principle also that the Court of Vienna devotes itself principally in all transactions to gaining the Governments, and only acting through them upon the peoples.

Thus a course suggested itself to Metternich by which Stein's schemes could be defeated, and at the

same time a new position could be made for Austria in the Germanic world. It was a most critical moment in German history. Since 1809 both Austria and Prussia, as German Powers, had practically ceased to exist. They were now to re-enter the German system, and the manner in which they should do this would determine the course both of its history and of their own. Prussia, which since the Peace of Basel had appeared to disadvantage by the side of Austria, had shown less spirit, and had been more disgracefully beaten, now made its new beginning in the most glorious manner. It is to this period and not, except in an indirect manner, to the age of Frederick the Great, that the present greatness of Prussia is to be traced. Stein, Scharnhorst, Hardenberg, Yorck, Gneisenau and Blücher had placed it again at the head of Germany, and among the Great Powers. Could Austria match this achievement? It was because she felt she could not openly face her old rival that she would not hear of the restoration of the Empire, and seemed even unwilling to see Germany revive in any form. But at this moment the opportunity presented itself of assuming a position in the Germanic World which, without the old title, should secure to her an influence analogous to that which she had enjoyed under the old constitution. Then she had rested on the Ecclesiastical Estates, on the oldest parts of the system, including her own historical position, and so she had been the head of a Conservative party. Now she might rest in like manner upon the Napoleonic sovereignty, which so far resembled her own that it was absolute, and by the help of this party she might oppose and hold in

check the new German Jacobinism of Stein and of Blücher's head-quarters. But it was evident that this position must be assumed once for all, and that when it had been assumed the whole course of German politics for a long time to come would be determined.

The decisive step was taken in the Treaty of Töplitz signed on September 9th. In this Treaty, after it had been provided that the Austrian and Prussian Monarchies should be restored as nearly as possible in the extent they had had in 1805, it was resolved in the next Article that the Confederation of the Rhine should be dissolved, and that full and entire independence should be granted to the states lying between Austria and Prussia so restored, and the Rhine and the Alps. Such independence, as Stein has told us, had been unknown to the old Germanic Constitution; it was the sovereignty which Napoleon had introduced into Germany as the bribe by which he induced the Princes of his Confederation to become the abject tools of his scheme of conquest. And the principle thus laid down did not long remain a dead letter. The Bavarian Government was now struggling with the same temptation to which we have seen so many Governments exposed during this year. What Prussia brooded over in January, Saxony in April, and Austria during the Armistice, Bavaria brooded over now, defection from Napoleon. Her condition was most like that of Saxony, which alone of those three Powers had resisted the temptation. The King of Bavaria owed to Napoleon his crown and his greatness, and in the eyes of the world at least it

would seem ingratitude to desert him in his misfortune, although the King in secret knew better how little gratitude he really owed. The feeling at Munich had long been as much opposed to France as we have seen it was at Dresden, the Queen and the Crown Prince did not conceal their hatred of the French, and no one could deny that the sacrifices Napoleon imposed, the lives and the wealth his wars absorbed, outweighed the benefits he had conferred. Yet Bavaria had made the campaign of May by the side of France, and not, as Saxony, with any show of reluctance. A short time before the termination of the Armistice the King had given assurances of his unwavering fidelity to the French cause. His defection did not take place until the moment when his interest plainly demanded it, and when fidelity began to be evidently dangerous. During the Armistice Bavaria armed with feverish haste, and beside the 8000 men whom she sent to the war in Saxony, had another much larger force assembled on the Inn, and began to organise a Landwehr.

It is surprising to find that it was left to Austria alone to receive Bavaria's adhesion and to negotiate the terms of it. What those terms should be was evidently a question of the most vital importance to Prussia, for the treaty with Bavaria would afford a standard of the conditions which the minor states of the Confederation of the Rhine would have a right to claim. Nay more than this, Bavaria actually held in the Franconian Principalities territory which had belonged to Prussia.[1] And yet we find only one slight trace that Prussia interfered at all

in the negotiation. W. v. Humboldt writes to Stein on October 4th : 'The idea of making a preparation by a special article in the treaty to be concluded with Bavaria for the future constitution of Germany had been developed further by the Chancellor and myself'—I rather gather from these words that it had been originally suggested by Stein—'and the Article draughted. But the plan of incorporating it in the treaty found little or no favour with Metternich, and failed entirely with the Emperor Alexander in his oral discussions with the Chancellor. I must talk to you of this.' Naturally enough Metternich preferred to arrange the treaty himself, and we now see the result of the Czar's negotiations with Lebzeltern. The Czar has promised to leave the Princes of the Confederation of the Rhine to Austria, he has promised to 'sign whatever treaties she may send him.' At this price he purchased the adhesion of Austria; the adhesion was all-important to himself, and the price was to be paid by Prussia. In this particular instance it must be acknowledged that the ally to be gained was of almost priceless value. Bavaria's defection might seem likely to give Napoleon the *coup de grace*[1], for it would endanger his communications and at the same time give the signal of desertion to the other members of the Confederation. As a matter of fact, after his defeat at Leipzig, he had to fight his way back to France against the Bavarians who met him at Hanau.

The end was that a Treaty was signed at Ried on October 8th between Austria and Bavaria, in which Bavaria joined the Alliance, undertaking to

[1] Ompteda, Vol. III. p. 210.

furnish 36,000 men immediately after the ratification, and to make such territorial cessions as should secure to Austria a good military frontier on the side of Bavaria. In return for this Austria guaranteed to Bavaria complete indemnity, and also full and complete sovereignty within her territories. The two contracting Powers, it was declared, regard it as a principal object of their efforts in the present war that the Confederation of the Rhine should be dissolved, and the complete and unqualified independence of Bavaria should be restored in such a manner that she should acquire the full enjoyment of her sovereignty, free from all foreign influence.

Stein's commentary upon this momentous act in his Autobiography is as follows:

> The Peace was too favourable to Bavaria, and yet no proportionate advantage accrued to the Allies, for their army was steadily advancing after Blücher's bold passage of the Elbe at Wartenburg on October 3rd, and the great decisive blows could not but take place in a few days; if the result should be favourable, less favourable conditions might be prescribed to Bavaria, and indeed in the sequel the fulfilment of these proved impossible to Austria. The interest of the country was entirely overlooked in the Treaty, and an unreserved sovereignty ensured in Art. IV. to the King of Bavaria, and the suppression of the rights of the Estates, of the Mediatised and of the Imperial Towns which dated from 1806, was confirmed. I could not refrain from expressing my indignation at this diplomatic production at Comotau, where I heard of it on October 12th, and where the Cabinets were assembled.

We cannot take too careful note of this turning-point in German affairs. Not only is it a prelude to the reconstruction of Germany effected in the next year at the Congress of Vienna, but it is equally

remarkable as an abandonment by Austria of the policy of the age before. We remember the schemes of the Emperor Joseph; in his mind the true policy of Austria lay in the annexation of Bavaria. Those schemes had been laid aside during the ascendancy of France, but it might be expected that they would revive at the moment of her fall. In Joseph's time they had seemed revolutionary; they would scarcely have seemed so in 1813. For it was evident that a great redistribution of territory must now take place; the removal of the Middle States was now advocated not merely by unscrupulous politicians like Joseph himself or Thugut, but by such men as Stein; and what might be recommended as necessary for the well-being of Germany could now be justified by the treason of these Middle States against Germany. Perhaps of all these Middle States Bavaria had sinned most deeply. At this moment, therefore, if Metternich instead of opposing Stein had adopted Stein's methods, or we may say if Stadion instead of Metternich had been the Austrian Minister, an incomparable opportunity occurred of realising the project of Joseph in another way. Instead of negotiating with the King Austria might have decreed his deposition, raised the population in the name of Germany, and inflicted on Bavaria the same fate which Prussia afterwards would have inflicted and partly did inflict on Saxony.

Had this course been adopted, in which case Austria would have been bound to support instead of opposing at Vienna the annexation of Saxony by Prussia, the original plan of Stein would have been realised in the main, and Germany would have been

divided into two great Powers, Prussia being decidedly predominant in the North and Austria overwhelmingly so in the South. It was not, be it observed, from any indifference to territorial aggrandisement, still less from any moral scruple, that Austria took another course. She too aggrandised herself at Vienna, but in Italy not in Germany. Meanwhile her rival's acquisitions were German. Hence the gains of Prussia were solid and permanent, but those of Austria brought her in the next generation into conflict with the nationality principle, and so were lost. Meanwhile the revived influence in Germany which Austria owed to the Treaty of Ried was equally transitory. For this influence, since she owed it to her championship of the Napoleonic sovereignty, brought her into conflict with the principle of liberty.

We should be glad to hear more of the protest against this Treaty which Stein made, as he tells us, on October 12th. But nothing further seems to be known about it, and as the autobiography was written in the first instance to be read by the Crown Prince of Bavaria Stein's pen is naturally under constraint at this point. The Czar and the King of Prussia were absent, and the politicians perhaps indifferent to everything except the fact, doubtless of considerable magnitude, that Bavaria was won, or else half blinded by the shadow of the great catastrophe into which they were entering at that moment, for the battle of Leipzig was fought a few days after.

Stein resided at this time principally at Prag, but made occasional visits to Töplitz. On Sep-

tember 21st he writes thus from Töplitz to his wife: 'The Emperor has conferred on me the Order of St Andrew; you know that it is the first Order of Russia, and is seldom conferred; I must regard it as a proof of the great kindness which he desires to show me. When we re-enter Germany, which I think we shall do pretty soon, I shall take up my old position again (he means the position of head of the Central Administration); after that, whether I follow the head-quarters or not, I shall be obliged to have an establishment of my own. Pray, my love, make inquiries for a very good cook.' Even in the choice of a cook, we observe, patriotism may be shown. 'When the cooks come,' he writes later, 'make a trial of each and choose the most suitable, but prefer the German if he is good, even if another is better.'

Critical as the arrangement with Bavaria was, Stein seems to give it less attention than another affair. By the middle of September the Allies found the prospects of April rising before their eyes again. They began to look forward to a course of conquest, and the necessity of reviving the Central Administration forced itself upon their minds. We are told that the suggestion did not come this time from Stein, but that in the part of Saxony called the Lausitz, which had fallen into the hands of the Allies, much oppression had been exercised through arbitrary requisitions made independently by different army-corps, and that accordingly Hardenberg had about September 19th invited Stein to Töplitz, that he might organise as before a system of administration and requisition, which should have the

sanction of the Allies, for conquered territory. But this time a new difficulty was encountered. The consent of Austria was now necessary, and Metternich had not only, as may be supposed, a personal dislike to Stein, but also a suspicion of this particular organisation which Stein had invented. His suspicion seems to have been increased by the interest Hardenberg now took in it, and still more by an elaborate plan which W. v. Humboldt drew up, and he fancied he saw in the Central Administration a Prussian contrivance for introducing into Saxony a provisional Government, which should pave the way to the annexation of the country to Prussia. And indeed the suspicion was not unreasonable, for Stein had just asserted the necessity of this annexation in the same Memoir on the Future Constitution of Germany, from which I have lately quoted. On account of the importance which this Prussian claim to Saxony acquired in the next year, I give the passage in question at length. After proposing—for this was his view at the time—to revive the imperial title associated with real authority for the benefit of Austria, he continues thus:

But at the same time Prussia must not be alienated from Germany, and she must receive sufficient power to be able to help in its defence without overstraining her resources and putting her political existence to hazard; she must be powerful and independent. The German spirit is preserved in Prussia more free and pure than in Austria with its mixture of Slavs and Hungarians and its Turkish and Slavonic frontier, inevitable hindrances to its developement, even if its progress had not also been impeded in the 17th and 18th centuries by intellectual repression and intolerance.

We may remark in passing that this statement is not compatible with that inclination to Catholicism and dislike of the Reformation which Schön declares him to have exhibited at this very time. What follows is evidently suggested by his remembrance of the war of 1792—1795.

A strong sense of weakness withheld Prussia from participation in distant wars; she had only 9,000,000 inhabitants, from 36 to 38 million thalers of revenue, an army of 250,000 men. The revenue was insufficient for foreign wars, the army too numerous for the population if we take the standard of 20,000 to a million; her provinces were scattered, and a part of her subjects, the Poles, disaffected.

The Prussian State is still important to Europe and especially to Germany on account of its geographical situation, the intelligence of its inhabitants, its Government and the greatness of its acquired culture. The necessity of its restoration has been recognized by Russia, Austria and England, but its restoration without its internal reinforcement would be of no use or effect. Prussia has paid dearly for the political indifferentism which she showed from the time of the Peace of Basel, and has vindicated once more with her best blood her pretensions to her ancient military renown and to an honourable place among nations.

To give strength and a continuous frontier to Prussia we must incorporate with her Mecklenburg, Holstein and Electoral Saxony. The two last may be disposed of under the right of conquest. The Dukes of Mecklenburg may be indemnified by an equivalent taken from the Duchy of Berg.

What is to be thought of these schemes of redistribution it will be most convenient to consider when the narrative brings us to the Congress of Vienna. But when the writer of this passage was put forward, in the very month after it was written, by the Prussian Ministers for the Presidency of a Commission whose first business was to be the

creation of a provisional Government for this very territory of Electoral Saxony, Metternich was perhaps not unreasonably suspicious when he attributed to them ulterior views.

Nevertheless it was not necessary for him to make any open opposition. Metternich and Stein were brought together at Töplitz by Hardenberg, and the plan which had been drawn out by Humboldt was understood to meet his approval, as Ompteda writes on September 27th. It seems that Stein now somewhat hurriedly left Töplitz, apparently in order to begin his task of organising a Government for Saxony. Two or three days afterwards, Metternich's approval having now been given formally, Hardenberg took the papers to the Czar, who likewise expressed his approval of the plan but detained the papers, which required his *approuvé*. It was not found possible to get them back from him before he left Töplitz for Comotau on October 5th, and on departing he left word that some points remained still unsettled and that the return of Metternich, who had left for Prag, must be expected. The Czar's secret understanding with Austria here betrays itself again. Humboldt writes to Stein: 'I do not understand the matter, and am sorry that you did not remain. There is an intrigue at the bottom of it, perhaps of Metternich's, but it may also be Nesselrode's.'

Another passage in the same letter is worth quoting:

> Your Excellency will rate us tremendously, and yet we are quite innocent, the Chancellor and I. Here is the history.... I do beg you earnestly, stay with us. My cordial respect you are

sure of, and the Chancellor's views also are unmistakable—we agree with you on most points, but your ideas, your impulse, your fire is often missed, and the affair is really now at its most pregnant moment. I cannot approve your journey to Bautzen.... The little Lausitz does not deserve this journey of yours. There are more important affairs here, and you are wanted. You will say that you are idle here. But one may labour and be useful without having an actual business. Influence passes mainly through speech, discussion, advice, censure, &c., and you can exert this sort of influence in an infinitely higher degree than anyone, because you bring the gift of wit to the discussion, and every argument of yours glows with the fire that comes from the heart.

The reader has had before him Arndt's description of Stein's conversational power, in which he may perhaps have suspected some friendly exaggeration. He may see now how it struck W. v. Humboldt, who could hardly fail to be a good judge, for he had heard every variety of brilliant conversation in the company of diplomatists, scholars, savants and men of letters, and had lived for years in the closest intimacy with Goethe and Schiller. Stein's manner, we can see from this description, was unlike all that he had known elsewhere; its charm was not properly conversational, for it had no repose; but it struck this experienced judge as unique in force and fire. Perhaps this was the time at which Humboldt and Stein saw most of each other; and the Princess Louise, who had just before been the confidante of Niebuhr's grievances, read now in a letter from Humboldt, 'I hope Stein will remain with us henceforth; I feel an infinite regard and love for him.'

We may read the letter which he wrote to his wife from Comotau on October 12th, that is, the day on which he made his protest against the Treaty

of Ried. In it he mentions the adhesion of Bavaria, but without any expression of disapproval of the terms of it. 'Very probably,' he writes, 'Saxony will soon be evacuated by Napoleon; Bavaria's adhesion facilitates undertakings against the Main and in Franconia, and will hasten the retreat of the French, who can no longer sustain the superiority both moral and physical of the Allies, even if we put into the scale the superiority of Napoleon's military talents.' He also refers to the overthrow of Jerome: 'I should like to have been in Cassel and to have seen the comical long faces of all those wretches who attached themselves to the sorry King Jerome, and played an active part in the farce which that good-for-nothing scamp brought upon the stage.'

In the last chapter we saw Napoleon deliberately resolving not to purchase the most important foreign alliance by any serious concessions, and choosing rather to depend on the strength of his own Empire in the struggle against Europe. There would have been no foolhardiness in this, considering the immense magnitude of the French Empire taken together with the kingdom of Italy and the Confederation of the Rhine, but for the exhaustion of the population, by unprecedented losses, and for the slenderness of the tie which bound the Confederation to its French Protector. German Princes had been found unpatriotic enough to send their subjects to fight by his side against their own countrymen, but they had done so for gain, and would not continue to do so when it ceased to be profitable, while the artificial German States which he had created

out of his conquests had not stability enough to be of use to him in his misfortune. The Kingdom of Westphalia was now breaking up, and the principal member of the Rhine Confederation had gone over to the Allies with an army of 36,000 men. If Würtemberg, Baden and Nassau should follow this example, and the Duchy of Berg go the way of the Kingdom of Westphalia, Napoleon would find himself in the heart of Germany, surrounded and cut off from France by a nation in arms.

Thus in the middle of October Napoleon's position was essentially different from what it had been at the expiration of the Armistice. Then he had depended on the resources of a vast though exhausted and partly disaffected Empire; now he rested solely on the army which he had with him in Saxony. His only chance henceforth lay in victory. Could he at this crisis win another Austerlitz his affairs would improve. The dissolution of the Confederation would be arrested at least for the time, and he would be able to make his way back into France. This is all that can be even imagined, for such a general downfall as followed Jena was impossible in a country which had the Landwehr and Landsturm, and the defection of Austria from the Coalition, which had seemed possible at the beginning of September, was not conceivable after her grand stroke of the Treaty of Ried. Moreover the greatest victory would not check Wellington, who was now descending from the Pyrenees. But for the winning of an Austerlitz more was required than the skill of a Napoleon. The other factor was now wanting, the army of the Revolution, which had been created in the *levée en*

masse of 1793 and formed in long years of warfare. It was observed that Napoleon's present army had quite a different character.

The French troops (writes Ompteda), consisting in great part of young soldiers, fight in much the same way as the troops that were hastily raised in the first days of the Revolution. Now, as then, brandy is served out to the soldiers, and particularly to the cavalry, a little while before an attack is to take place, and the troops already understand it as the sign of an approaching engagement with the enemy. Their first attack is then made with great impetuosity, but if the first shock is firmly met, confusion soon begins in the French ranks.

The battles of the end of August and the beginning of September had been for the most part offensive on the French side. They had been fought in Prussian and Austrian territory, in Silesia, Bohemia, and the Mark of Brandenburg. In the first week of October the war changes its character, and the offensive passes over to the Allies. The Silesian army under Blücher passes the Elbe at Wartenburg on October 3rd, and on the next day the Northern army under the Crown Prince of Sweden crossed it at Acken and Rosslau. When Napoleon approached Leipzig on the 14th he heard cannon on the south, which told him that the Bohemian army also had descended into Saxony.

We must not be detained by the details of the battles which followed, at Liebertwolkwitz on the 14th, at Wachau on the 16th, at Möckern on the same day, and at Leipzig on the 18th, or of the capture of Leipzig which followed on the 19th. Let us only mark precisely what was the effect of the catastrophe. This defeat did not, any more than

the Russian disaster, immediately and necessarily involve the fall of Napoleon. Considered with respect to him, it carried with it the downfall of his ascendancy in Germany, and brought him back to the position which he had held as First Consul. Considered with respect to Germany itself it involved the downfall of the Confederation of the Rhine, and particularly the direct conquest and capture of one of its leading princes, the King of Saxony. But when once Napoleon had made his way with his discomfited army across the Rhine, what would become of the French Empire now a second time worsted in war remained to be decided.

CHAPTER VII.

STEIN AND THE FALL OF NAPOLEON.

THE period which follows extends from October 19th, 1813, to May 30th, 1814, which is the date of the Treaty of Paris. It may be subdivided thus. The month of November is occupied with the direct consequences of the Battle of Leipzig. On the 1st and 2nd Napoleon carried his defeated army, some 70,000 men, across the Rhine at Mainz, and in the following days the Princes of the Rhine Confederation made their peace with the Allies. The middle of the month is occupied with the deliberations of the conquerors at Frankfurt and their negotiations with Napoleon. Near the end of it occurs the reconquest of Holland. December commences with the manifesto, in which the Allies declared their intention of prosecuting the war against Napoleon, whose cause they affect to separate from that of the French people, and the month passes in preparations on both sides for the new struggle. The invasion begins with the new year, and on March 31st Alexander and Frederick William enter Paris. April

and May are spent in negotiations, and in the political revolution which in France accompanied the conclusion of the war.

Stein took his share in all, entered Paris on April 9th, and remained there till June 3rd. But in this chapter of his life we shall observe the rule of condensing the narrative in proportion as it departs from German affairs.

Stein reached Leipzig the day after it was entered by the conquerors, and on the next day he writes to his wife some of his reflexions on the great event:

> There it lies then, the monstrous fabric cemented with the blood and tears of so many millions, and reared by an insane and accursed tyranny; from one end of Germany to the other we may venture to say aloud that Napoleon is a villain and the enemy of the human race, that the shameful fetters in which he bound our country are broken, and the shame with which they covered us is washed out in streams of French blood. We owe these great results to the firmness and noble courage which the Emperor Alexander discovered in the great decision of last year, the heroic devotion of his people, the spirit of justice and moderation which he displayed in all negotiations with the Powers which he invited to join their efforts to his own, to the devotion and abundant energy which Prussia has shown since she entered into the contest, to the spirit of indignation and hatred against the oppressor which was displayed on all sides.

It is curious to see how much more struck Stein seems to be with the merits of Russia than with those of Prussia. He could not but catch an occasional glimpse of the Czar's double-dealing, but perhaps he called it weakness, and threw the whole blame upon Metternich. For the rest, his thoughts follow in the track of his own experience. It had

been his lot to look at the whole contest with Russian eyes, and for a long time he had fretted over the backwardness of Prussia. Prussian officials had thwarted him at Königsberg, Prussian diplomatists at Kalisch, the King himself had been cold to him at Breslau. He acknowledges the great things Prussia has done since, but he cannot yet forget how differently she had behaved before, and if a Landwehr has been raised, he remembers better than others that a Commission from the Czar had been needed to set the scheme in motion. He goes on: 'We owe the great result not to cowardly statesmen or miserable princes, but to'—the people? No, this strikes him as too much in the style of the Revolution—'to two bloody and eventful campaigns, rich in laurels and tears, to many bloody battles....' He ends by mentioning that the Allied Powers have conferred upon him the Central Administration of the territories occupied. 'Repnin is named Governor of Saxony. I shall set out in a fortnight, as soon as the armies reach Frankfurt.'

It appears from this announcement that all the hindrances which had stood in the way of the revival of the Central Administration vanished at once on his appearance, for the matter must have been settled on the very day of his arrival at Leipzig. Hardenberg and Humboldt attributed the delays that had taken place earlier to Stein's departure, and it certainly seems that they ceased on his reappearance. One of Ompteda's correspondents remarks, 'I cannot but admire the adroitness of the Baron vom Stein, who has been able to overcome the Austrian prejudices against his person

in such a degree that his power and influence are evidently much increased by the new arrangement.' At the same time we do not positively know that the result was due to any adroitness on his part, and it is possible that Metternich's or Nesselrode's opposition may have been withdrawn for other reasons.

The Treaty which reconstituted the Central Administration was signed on October 21st by Metternich, Hardenberg, and Nesselrode for Austria, Prussia and Russia; Sweden acceded to it on the following day, and England later. The object was stated to be to raise funds for the expenses of the war from the territories which should be occupied, and to give them a War Administration such as might be most serviceable to the common cause. Under the new arrangement all territories were to be placed which should be for the moment without a Government, or whose rulers should not have joined the Allies; but such territories were excepted as had belonged before 1805 to Austria, Prussia, Sweden, or Hannover; that is, the signatories of the Treaty, —if we treat, as we are obliged to do, Hannover as identical with England. As to the territories whose Princes should have joined the Allies, the Central Administration should send an agent to them, but should have only such authority over them as should be granted in the respective treaties of adhesion. The territories were to be administered by Governors General. The principal function of the Board was to be the nomination of the Governors General and of the Agents, and the controlling of their administration, with full power of recall. The Governors

were not, except in extreme necessity, to interfere with the Governments already existing, or to act independently of them. The cost of the Central Administration was to be defrayed out of the revenues of the territories administered. It was to be in constant communication with a council of Delegates from the Allied Sovereigns, of which Hardenberg was to be Dean, it was only to extend its operations over a new territory in accordance with their express command, and constantly to report its proceedings to them. In Articles 7 and 8 it is stated that the conduct of the Central Administration is entrusted by the Allied Sovereigns to the Minister Baron vom Stein, upon whom the sole responsibility rests, and who shall create according to his own choice the necessary official Boards.

It will be observed that in the new form of the Central Administration Stein holds a much greater position than in the old. There he was nominally not even President of the Board, though in the absence of Count Kotschubei he actually presided. Now he is not merely President, but he creates his own Council, and what is still more important, the functions of the Council are purely consultative. In German technical language the bureaucratic form is substituted for the collegial. Stein's authority, as far as the members of the Council are concerned, is absolute, and he is only controlled by the Delegates of the Allied Sovereigns to whom he reports. Naturally he was much pleased at the position accorded to him; a letter from one of his subordinates written early in November, says: 'He is very well satisfied,

so are all of us, particularly myself, but we are working like five hundred Dutchmen.'

This last statement we can well believe, for Stein goes to work with the Napoleonic rapidity habitual to him. The first task which devolved upon him in his new capacity, the organisation of a Government for the conquered kingdom of Saxony, is actually accomplished on the same day on which the Central Administration itself officially came into existence. In the next year, when Saxony had become the burning question at the Congress of Vienna, much was said of the Provisional Government which then existed in Saxony, and the name of Prince Repnin was much in men's mouths, and occurs sometimes even in the Hansard of that year. Prince Repnin was the first Governor General appointed by Stein under the Treaty. He was named on October 21st, and on the 23rd the whole Council of Government had been created, and was assembled and addressed by Stein. It contained another Russian besides the Prince, a Prussian, and four Saxons, one of whom, Colonel v. Carlowitz, had lately been a fellow-traveller of Stein's, and had pleased him by his devotion to the good cause, 'a quality,' as he remarks, 'rare among the Saxons;' and another was Körner, the father of the poet. The Prince himself had been Russian Ambassador at the Westphalian Court, and was well acquainted with German affairs. Stein seems to have been in no good humour with the Saxons, who had given so much trouble since April when he had hoped to bring them over easily to the cause of the Allies. He called them a people of lackeys, and said they were the German-French, as

the Hannoverians were the German-Chinese. In his address on the 23rd he vented some of this ill-humour, but at the same time expressed his hope that for the future all would go well. To the organisation of Saxony he was able to devote not quite three weeks.

The following passage from a letter of Nesselrode addressed to him from Meiningen Oct. 30th, shows the nature of the claims made on him from other quarters:

> Our advance is so rapid that we must hurry on the nomination of the different Governors in order to preserve order and unity in our administrative measures. We have drawn up the enclosed list, which the Emperor has approved; I hope it will also receive the high approbation of your Excellency. But what seems to me still more important is that your Excellency should join us again as soon as possible. For this purpose I am commissioned to send you a most pressing invitation on the part of Count Metternich. On your journey you might perhaps settle with all the Princes whom you find on your way. We have referred them all to your Excellency, and only reserved to ourselves the conclusion of the Act of Adhesion. According to the news from the interior of France, which is confirmed by intercepted letters, the exertions made for the maintenance of the war are enormous; it is necessary therefore that Germany should keep pace. For this purpose we reckon on your activity and firmness. Do come to us soon. The great head-quarters will be, with God's help, at Frankfurt in eight days; there it is to be hoped we shall have leisure to set in order what we leave behind us. Wrede is near Hanau, resolutely awaiting the Emperor Napoleon there, and is most eager to give him battle.

It is rather startling to find Stein's jealous rival in the favour of the Czar so eager now for his assistance, and his rival in German politics, Metternich, seconding Nesselrode. We learn from this that it

was by no mere miracle of adroitness that he had overcome their prejudices, but that they had come to feel a new and pressing want. This is easily understood. In September, when they threw difficulties in Stein's way, his proposed Central Board may perhaps have seemed to them by no means urgently necessary, possibly even a mere contrivance by which he hoped to give himself importance, for the fortune of the campaign was not yet decided. The Battle of Leipzig made all the difference. Not only did it throw the government of Saxony instantly upon the Allies, but it made the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine a matter of certainty. In a few days they would have to undertake the government of half Germany. All the Empire which Napoleon won at Austerlitz was recovered at Leipzig. But a Coalition would evidently find still more difficulty in administering conquests than it had hitherto found in making them. There was a sudden demand for a man who should be at the same time a powerful administrator and in the confidence of the Allied Sovereigns. Stein certainly had not the confidence of the Emperor of Austria, but in other respects there was no one who could be compared with him in fitness; and it seems that at this moment even Nesselrode and Metternich felt glad that a man was to be found who not only had a great name in Prussia and the confidence of the Czar, but a character and an energy fitting him in a manner to succeed Napoleon as Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine. Thus we have before us the process by which Stein became Emperor of Germany.

Besides organising a Government for Saxony, Stein was occupied while he remained at Leipzig—it is to be observed that Dresden had not yet surrendered to the Allies—with the question of the hospitals. Thirty-four thousand men, principally the wounded of the great battle, lay here in the most appalling misery and neglect, dying by hundreds of sheer want. A philanthropic physician, Dr Reil, came from Berlin, and at Stein's request wrote a report on the subject, which is too terrible to be quoted here. When Arndt reached Leipzig, near the end of October, he found Reil and Eichhorn, who was Secretary to the Central Board and has left an official history of its proceedings, the most frequent guests at Stein's tea-table. Reil, he says, was a sort of medical Commander-in-chief and displayed great energy, though he told his friends that he believed his days to be numbered, since he had taken the breath of a dying patient. He was not mistaken; a few weeks after he left Leipzig for Halle, to be present at his daughter's wedding, and died on the way. Leipzig reminded Arndt of Wilna as he had seen it in the winter before; here, too, were hills of dead bodies, half-eaten by dogs and ravens. On November 9th he saw Stein and Eichhorn set out for head-quarters at Frankfurt, where, after a day spent in Weimar, they arrived on the 13th, if we may trust Pertz—for Stein himself says about the 10th, and Jackson records the arrival in his diary as happening on the 16th.

Here he remained for a full month, and here, in the lull of military affairs, politics moved forward rapidly. Such an assemblage of all the Sovereigns

with all the diplomatists of Europe in a great historic town, but without any preparation or pomp, constituted a kind of shabby rehearsal of the Congress of Vienna. Jackson's Diary enables us to realise it:

November 17th. In the evening I assisted at a ball given by the town of Frankfurt to the Allied Sovereigns. Little expense was incurred in preparations for it, the ball-room being but poorly decorated and no supper provided. But this fête was remarkable on account of the number of royal personages assembled together under the peculiar circumstances of the moment. Almost as many stars were to be seen glittering there as there were stars then shining in the firmament, and as many princely potentates as constellations—from the imperial and autocratic heads to the pettiest of the immediate princes. Besides the King of Prussia we had His Majesty of Bavaria—a good, jolly, farmer-like-looking fellow, crossed with the heaviness of a German prince, and who formed a principal object of curiosity and attention in this motley assembly. Then there was the Duke of Würzburg, very like his brother, the Emperor. The King of Würtemberg, who is on his way hither, was almost the only absentee. Bonaparte's papa-in-law sneaked about as he always does, as if he were ashamed of himself. His brother-emperor, Alexander, though for the second time only that I have seen him wear shoes and stockings since he was invested, did not condescend to wear the Garter; at which I felt in such a rage that I almost wished I could have had it to strangle him with. His Imperial Majesty sauntered about *faisant le joli cœur* with every pretty woman he met.

The venerable Marshal Blücher was present, covered with his well-earned honours, and wearing the latest additions to them, the Grand Crosses of Maria Theresa and St George. I saw also, for the first time since my return to the Continent, Prince William of Prussia, who was extremely gracious. He talked with me a good deal of our old Berlin days, and was much concerned to hear of my brother's ill-health.

As to the women, I never saw at any *réunion* less beauty or more vulgarity. It was said that the new princess (Metternich had just been made a Prince) was to appear at this ball; but I heard Metternich say that his wife had remained at Vienna

throughout the campaign, and at present had no thought of leaving it. The first in *rank*, then, as in beauty, was the banker's wife, Madame Bethmann, her pretensions to either one or the other being founded only on the poverty of all around her in both those qualities. Even a town-ball at Hull could hardly show a collection of women with less distinction in their appearance and manners; and as to good looks, I must in justice to my old friends say they would in that respect leave these Frankfurt belles far, far in the rear. There was a great crowd, but very little dancing. Alexander, and afterwards the King, led out Madame Bethmann, whose eyes—the best part of her face—then sparkled almost as brightly as the diamond stars of her illustrious cavaliers. She displayed some fine diamonds herself, and was certainly most superbly dressed.

Stein arrived yesterday, and showed himself for an hour at the ball. *On dit* that the joints of his Imperial Majesty's fingers—the only pliable parts about him—are become more pliable than ever; more I suspect than from what comes within their grasp there is any occasion for.

In this last sentence Jackson seems to hint at charges of corruption which in the gossip of the day were made against Stein. Such charges were certain to be made. As we have said Leipzig was the counterpart of Austerlitz, and it was followed by a corresponding sudden movement of the Small and Middle Princes, but in the opposite direction. As then they had rushed into the arms of France, so now they rushed into those of the Coalition. In the former case there had been monstrous tales of the bribery by which Talleyrand had profited, and Stein now stood in much the same position as Talleyrand. We hear of the Princes being kept waiting in his ante-room, and if they would condescend to do this they would no doubt also be ready to offer him money. On these antecedent probabilities gossip

would work. It is needless to say that Stein and Talleyrand were men of very different characters, and that the gossip which in the case of the latter very probably hit the mark has died away around Stein, so that no historian troubles himself to refute the charges that were made or to take any notice of them whatever.

It is only here at Frankfurt that Jackson's attention seems to have been drawn to Stein. In the earlier part of his diary Stein's name sometimes occurs, but it is never accompanied with any epithet or remark, and both the Jacksons were absent from Germany during Stein's Ministry, so that even now, when George Jackson and Stein came into pretty close contact at Frankfurt and Stein's new office has made him conspicuous, Jackson seems to observe him without any favourable prepossession. Under date November 20th we find the following:

At the Chancellor's we met M. de Stein, who had just completed his plan for the military organisation of Germany. It goes upon the principle of doubling in every instance the amount of contingent which, according to the Rhenish Confederation, each Power was to furnish to France, viz. one-half in regulars, the other in militia and levies (*i.e.* Landwehr and Landsturm). Both Stein and the Chancellor declared their disapproval of the measures taken and now in agitation respecting France (*i.e.* measures of conciliation) to be as strong as our own.

And under date December 1st we read the following:

Ancillon called early, and I had a long and interesting conversation with him. He admits that the state of affairs at this moment is most melancholy. The petty princes are disgusted with the hauteur and arrogance of Stein, and an indisposition towards our cause is excited, of which, if the tide should turn, it

would hardly be possible to calculate the mischief; whilst the indecision of Nesselrode and the nullity of Hardenberg threaten the worst consequences; for by them Metternich is become in fact Emperor, unrestricted by the control, though not unaccompanied by the dissatisfaction and ill-humour of his colleagues. Stein keeps the German princes waiting for hours in his anteroom, and when at last they obtain the honour of an audience, he treats them in a haughty, overbearing manner, which I am sure no Englishman, who had an atom of self-respect, would submit to.

Stein had long before avowed that he could not use the *suaviter in modo* with the German Princes. That he was not popular with them is not surprising, and may show at any rate that they had not succeeded in corrupting him. These Princes were in his view traitors against Germany and the cause of all her disasters, who richly deserved to be deposed, and would have been deposed at once if he could have had his way. How he himself regarded their importunate applications appears from the following, written to his wife on November 27th:

If I am less regular in writing than you have a right to expect, I beg you to attribute it partly to business and partly to the enormous waste of my time in listening to importunate and tedious people. The deluge of princes and sovereigns begins to abate, they have been treated much better than they deserved; meanwhile they have been bound to aid the common cause with troops, money and necessaries, and at the Peace their lot will be decided. The most ludicrous and at the same time most odious of them is the tyrant of Würtemberg, monstrous in figure and pride! His cowardice and debauchery—oh! this fellow will certainly come to an end suitable to such a character! All the other princelings are poor creatures, very much astonished at being treated with so much ceremony and being allowed a much more honourable existence than they have deserved by their contemptible behaviour.

It was not merely to indulge a personal antipathy that Stein treated these princes imperiously.

He was struggling against the policy of Ried which just at this time was working incalculable mischief. The principle of it received a new application in the Treaty concluded by Austria with Würtemberg at Fulda on November 3rd. The King's full sovereignty was assured to him, with reserve of the political arrangements which might be made for restoring and assuring the independence and liberty of Germany in the Peace soon to be concluded; but such arrangements were not to affect the original territories of Würtemberg, and were to be compensated by an equivalent as full and as convenient to Würtemberg. If these terms were not quite so good as those which had been granted to Bavaria, there was not on the other hand the same excuse for overlooking the crimes of the King of Würtemberg. He did not come in till after the Battle of Leipzig, whereas Bavaria came in before; he did not for a moment conceal his unreserved devotion to France, nor deserve his pardon even by any affectation of repentance, whereas Bavaria had made a serious attempt to cut off Napoleon's retreat. What Stein says of him is fully confirmed by a strong adherent of Metternich, our own Lord Aberdeen, then at Frankfurt. He writes to Lord Castlereagh on December 24:

I am sorry to inform you of the loss of one of our new friends. The King of Würtemberg has written to Bonaparte to say that the alliance has been forced upon him, and that he looks forward to the time when he may be able to assist him with effect. The cause of this conduct is to be found in his hatred of Bavaria. He can never forgive Austria for granting more favourable terms to Bavaria than to himself.... The King is abhorred in the country, and I should not be the least surprised if measures were taken to

place the government of the State at least for the present in other hands.... A circumstance which occurred when the King received the intelligence of the battle of Hanau and, as it was then believed, of Wrede's death, excited universal indignation. The King was at supper with a party of a description of which you may probably have heard. The most savage joy was displayed, and the health of Napoleon repeatedly drunk. I leave you to judge if we can leave our rear exposed in the bold movement which we have now undertaken. We must be assured of the state of Würtemberg, as in the case of disaster treachery might be fatal. Of course an *éclat*, if possible, will be avoided.

Here we have a specimen of the effect of the Austrian policy. It did not merely sacrifice the interests of the people, or of Germany as a whole, to the military expediency of obtaining the alliance of the Princes, but it sustained the interest of the Princes even at the manifest risk of introducing an enemy into the camp.

All that Stein could do to check this infatuation was to procure the adoption of certain clauses to be inserted in the treaties with those States of the Rhenish Confederation which had not yet come in. These clauses bound them to acquiescence in the cessions of territory that might be found necessary at the Peace, and in the new order of things that might be found necessary for the preservation of the independence of Germany. He acknowledges that the clauses were very vague; it was perhaps a still greater mischief that Bavaria was not bound by them, and that Austria had entered on a course, which would incline her to strip them as much as possible of meaning.

Severity was however used in particular cases. There was no thought of protecting the Princes of

purely Napoleonic origin, the King of Westphalia, or the Grand-Duke of Berg. Some smaller princes, such as the Prince of Isenburg, incurred forfeiture for special crimes. One conspicuous example was made. Frankfurt itself, the old Imperial City, in which the Princes were at this moment assembled, had been lately under the government of—whom? Of our old friend Dalberg. He has accompanied us through the whole of our long narrative. As long before as 1785 Stein had expressed a wish that he might become Archbishop of Mainz, and he had risen to that title, and to other and stranger titles since. He was now Grand-Duke of Frankfurt, with Eugene Beauharnais as his nominated successor. As he was always brought out on occasions of show, so now he was selected as the most proper and dignified victim, and Stein, in whose behalf vain petitions were making to Dalberg when last we cast a look at him, now takes possession of his territory as President of the Central Board. It is said that he found the territory burdened with an administration numerous enough for a population of 10,000,000, and composed of corrupt adventurers, 'a French-Jewish pyramid,' with a certain Count Benzel-Sternau at the top. Dalberg had disappeared, 'carrying his bad conscience with him,' as Eichhorn says; the scape-goat, in fact, of greater criminals who were not suspected of having consciences at all!

Dalberg had made himself very popular in Frankfurt, particularly among the ladies, by his affable manners. One of these ladies extolled him to Stein whom she met at a party: 'Ah, your Excellency, he was *so* good!' His answer marks

how much his estimate had changed since 1785: 'Yes, Madam, he was *so* good! He did not eat children nor drink ink. Did he dance with you too? That is what he was—a dancing-master!'

And thus after Saxony it fell to Stein to organise Governments for the two Grand-duchies of Berg and Frankfurt, with some outlying territories, for as to the Kingdom of Westphalia the expelled Princes of the Houses of Brunswick and Hessen were restored in the greater part of it. His empire now began to be considerable in extent. He had created his bureau, nominating two Prussians, Friese and Eichhorn (later a Prussian Minister), and the Austrian Count Spiegel. His Russian nominee was one who has since become widely known, Nicolas Turgeneff, author of *La Russie et Les Russes*. None of those who knew Stein admired him more. He calls him the greatest of modern Germans, and in his book, when he urges upon the Russians reforms similar to those which were made in Prussia in 1808, he points to Stein as a proof that sweeping reforms are not necessarily inconsistent with pious reverence for the past. Nicolas Turgeneff suffered exile from Russia along with so many others at the accession of the Emperor Nicholas, and spent most of his long life in Paris. He outlived the war of 1870, and it is said that when his sons, who naturally were half Frenchmen, were tempted to fight for France, he was heard to exclaim, 'What! fight against Stein's country! Impossible!'

Commissions of the leading Ministers sat to lay down the general principles upon which the Board was to act in its three main tasks, which were the

raising of funds, the drawing of supplies, and the levying of troops from the territory of the Rhenish Confederation. It appears that in these Commissions Stein played the part of a Prime Minister, making his proposals and procuring the acceptance of them. The sum to be exacted was fixed at 17,000,000 gulden, and paper money was issued on the security of this fund. Troops of the line were to be raised to the amount of 145,000, and Landwehr to the same number. Over these great Departments Ministers were set. Stein appointed Count Solms-Laubach to superintend the financial arrangements of the Board, and at the same time the important affair of hospitals. For his War Minister to superintend the raising of troops he appointed the Prussian Lieutenant-Colonel Rühle v. Lilienstern, with the title of Commissary-General. At the same time he nominated Agents of the Board to several Courts; on the list of these we find the poet Max v. Schenkendorf, who was appointed to Baden. From the territory which was under the direct government of the Board Stein computes that he raised 57,000 men, that is, 40,000 from Saxony, 11,000 from the Duchy of Berg, and 6,000 from that of Frankfurt. But where the Board confined itself to watching and stimulating the action of the Governments it met with the greatest opposition. This subject may be dismissed when we have transcribed a few sentences from a report sent to the Austrian Chief of the Staff, Radetzky, on February 8th, 1814, and written under the direction of Rühle v. Lilienstern.

The arming of the country goes on slowly. It is acquiesced in willingly by the people, but regarded by the Governments with

such indifference, not to say repugnance, that we may see that the old spirit, which for centuries has forbidden our divided country to be great, has grown worse rather than better through what has passed.

Würtemberg, to begin with, has published an edict for a Landsturm of 100,000 men, which is a real mockery of signed treaties and a contempt of the Allies.... As to Darmstadt, its edicts have the appearance of being intended to bring the *levée en masse* and all that is involved in it into ridicule and contempt by inadequacy in the design and pitiable feebleness in the execution. These petty Governments will not do for the preservation of Germany what they never dared to refuse to their master Napoleon. ... Most miserable of all seem to me the Hessians of the Electorate, dragging after the army without uniforms or cloaks—mere food for the hospital! ... We see a schism and opposition between the views of the people and the Governments, and especially between the way of thinking of the *ci-devant* sovereigns, the mediatised and their present sovereign lords. The people are full of hatred to everything French, and readiness for whatever may prevent their return. ... It is recognized that Germany wants a single Government, and that all evils had their source in its division. The enormous debts, the waste of the petty Governments, the reflexion that taxation cannot but increase in consequence of all this arbitrary power, occur to all. ...Among the mediatised the tone of feeling has altered since they were transformed into subjects. The memory of their past greatness seems to them not to be recalled. They are in favour of a powerful Constitution, which may protect them by just laws against the lords who have been forced on them by French interference. They are ready for everything which may lead to this, most ready to be servants of a great Prince, but not slaves of a small one. ... As to the sovereign Governments, almost all are so little German, so little pleased with what is now happening, that in their hearts they would have the past back again. ... They would gladly, if fortune were to change, bring the troops they now levy for the Allies as an oblation to their old Master, who was much more to their mind, who let them do what they would on condition that they put the resources of their territories at the service of his dominion.

It is in this character of the Governments that we have the explanation of Stein's hauteur and arro-

gance. The most imperious man in Germany could not be imperious enough in dealing with them. How he raged, some stories remain to show. Of the Elector of Hessen he exclaimed, 'This will never do. I must have cannon; arguments are thrown away upon this man.' But he was not always in this mood. We find him at times playing the peace-maker between Princes and their subjects. A Prince of Waldeck, who had assumed the Napoleonic sovereignty in his small dominions by cancelling the rights of the Estates, was brought by Stein to a better mind.

Thus in this moment of transition the unity of Germany was in a fashion preserved by Stein's Central Department. Outside the Prussian and Austrian dominions his authority went everywhere by means of his Agents, if not of his Governors General, though no doubt in countries like Würtemberg it was a very feeble and ineffectual authority. It is said that some officers conceived at this time the notion of converting Stein's nickname into a reality. They applied to Nicolaus Vogt, a Professor of Constitutional Law, to know whether Stein was legally eligible to the imperial throne of Germany, and received an answer in the affirmative.

It was a matter of course that the sequestration of his estates, which had continued since 1809, should cease with the fall of Napoleon's power in Germany. The Duke of Nassau took it off and paid up all arrears, while Blücher garrisoned the estate with soldiers, and Stein's sister Marianne went to take charge of it. Atonement at the same time was made for the injuries which had been done

to her, and the restoration of the Foundation of Wallerstein was decreed by the Elector of Hessen. We find Stein thinking how he may compensate his wife for her long privations. 'It depends entirely on you,' he writes, 'to choose your place of residence where you will, whether at Berlin or Vienna, and settle yourself there as soon as it is agreeable to you, and I earnestly entreat you to consult your own pleasure only.'

But during these same short weeks at Frankfurt something was decided of far greater importance and far more interesting, we may be sure, to Stein than the transformation of the Rhenish Confederation, or even the restoration of his estates. The last miracle of this miraculous year was performed. The destruction of Napoleon's Empire had gone forward since the first months in successive stages answering to the stages by which, since the beginning of the century, it had been created. The Treaty of Kalisch had cancelled that of Tilsit, and revived that of Bartenstein. The adhesion of Austria to the Coalition had cancelled, in a sense, the Treaty of Pressburg, so that in the war of the autumn the question which had been decided in the campaign of 1805 was tried over again. Leipzig was the counterpart of Austerlitz, and the creation of Stein's Central Department was the Repeal of the Act of the Confederation of the Rhine. The process of undoing had paused for a moment at Lunéville. The personal work of Napoleon was substantially destroyed; but the work of the Revolution, that earlier work of which he had been only a principal author, but neither the sole author nor the designer, still

remained. We have remarked that in reading of this mighty change our minds move too fast. We know so well what the catastrophe is to be that we have scarcely patience to attend to the details, and are like the audience at a play who hear nothing of the closing scene because they are busy in looking for their hats and overcoats. It is curious to observe that those who originally witnessed the transformation were not only not in this mood but in just the opposite. Their minds did not move fast enough. They could not realise, could not believe what they saw. After having for so many years waited in vain for a change of fortune, they had insensibly become incapable of recognizing it when it came, and all the more so because it came with such extreme suddenness. We have seen that neither the Prussian nor the Austrian Government had been confident that the Russian disaster would lead even to the downfall of the Rhenish Confederation. All they had ventured to hope was that they themselves would be relieved from the extreme pressure which they had felt, Prussia since 1807, Austria since 1809. Events had outstripped all their expectations. Their armies stood at the Rhine, and Germany was free. With a kind of bewilderment they saw a series of new questions come into view, questions which they had considered to be at rest, and which they had never expected to hear discussed again. Who of late years had imagined that the settlement of Lunéville would ever be touched? It seemed a matter of ancient history that at the close of the 18th century Europe had involved itself in a rash war with the French Revolution, and that France rousing herself

in terrible might had not only shaken off the invaders, but had actually conquered Belgium and the Left Bank of the Rhine. For nine long years the European controversy about the natural frontiers of France had continued. In that quarrel a series of republican heroes had won renown, of whom some were dead long since, Hoche, Marceau, Kléber, Pichegru, and others had passed out of sight, as Dumouriez, Jourdan, and that Moreau who in this summer of 1813 had flashed into light again for a moment, only to disappear for ever. It had been the glory of the First Consul to settle that controversy which others had begun, and after it was settled there had been for a moment a universal peace, and there had been a continental peace of four years. The great conquest of the Revolution seemed as secure as the conquests of Louis XIV., Belgium united as indissolubly to France as Alsace, or say Franche Comté. It was now, while the Allies paused at Frankfurt, that this question came to the front again.

In other words, the war became offensive instead of defensive. Hitherto the motive of the Allies had been resistance to an intolerable tyranny. It was quite another motive which now led them to reclaim Belgium and the Left Bank. Those populations had now been French so long that no one thought of them any longer as subject to a foreign tyranny. The demand now made was inspired by a conscious superiority of power. It was the demand of conquerors, not of successful insurgents. The balance of fortune was not merely brought to an equilibrium by the new weights put into the scale; it suddenly

inclined to the other side. And this was plainly inevitable. It was not merely that France had lost between May and October that army which in the first months of the year it had seemed a miracle that she should be able to furnish. Besides this, it was now perceived that in estimating the change which had taken place the forces of the Rhenish Confederation must be reckoned twice. Not only Napoleon had lost them, but the Allies had gained them. Just as after the Armistice a new army had been added to the Allied force, that of the Emperor of Austria, so now a new Potentate entered the field with his army; I mean Stein. There could be no doubt, when the matter was quietly considered at Frankfurt, that, considering the unbounded resources of the Allies on the one hand, and on the other the contraction of Napoleon's territory and its exhaustion by the losses of 1812 and 1813, the Coalition, provided only it remained unanimous, could exact from Napoleon almost any concessions it might desire.

The change in the character of the war was announced to the public by Arndt, who remained behind at Leipzig when Stein left it for Frankfurt, and there wrote his pamphlet, The Rhine a German River but not a French Frontier. This was a direct attack upon the settlement of Lunéville, and an announcement that the work of the Revolution must go the same way as the work of the Empire. Arndt tells us that it had the full approval of Gessler, Körner and Stein, and that Hardenberg, who was then personally a stranger to him, sent him a letter of approbation. Considering how very

opportunely the question was now raised, and that Stein systematically used Arndt's voice when he wanted to address the public, we expect to be told that the pamphlet was written for Stein and to his order, but since Arndt does not say so, it seems likely that the idea and plan were really his own.

But the Coalition was in some degree weakened by its very success. Austria in the first place desired nothing so much as peace, and in the second began to look for help to Napoleon, as soon as his power was reduced within compass, if he could be taught only a little moderation, against the Alliance of Russia and Prussia, and the dangerous principles which animated it. Gentz writes:

> The spirit which had been aroused in Germany through the universal resistance to the French dominion, which had been powerfully stimulated by Stein's proclamations, and which particularly in Prussia had reached such a point that the War of Liberation looked not unlike a War of Liberty, suggested serious reflexions and anxieties for the future; and the idea that the fall of a despotism founded on the Revolution might well lead to revolution again rather than to a real restoration, was one which I in particular was active in diffusing.

We have seen how in July Austria would have made peace without even positively requiring the dissolution of the Rhenish Confederation. She was equally ready now to grant France her 'natural frontiers.' She was supported by the new members of the Alliance, the Princes of the Confederation. And she had a friend in the King of Prussia's long-tried repugnance to decisive measures, and in the vague feeling which the campaigns of 1792 and 1793 had left behind, that however weak France might appear, she would prove unexpectedly formid-

able when invaded, and that an invasion in the winter was especially objectionable. Besides the King, Hardenberg among the statesmen and Knesebeck among the military men were also disposed for peace.

The war-party was still the old Prussian war-party of 1808, except that it had lost one leading member and gained another. Scharnhorst was gone. Gneisenau was its military and Stein its political chief; it is vaguely related that on the morrow after the Battle of Leipzig the two men had met in Leipzig market-place and had agreed together that the war must be prosecuted to the downfall of Napoleon. But this party had received a great accession in the Emperor Alexander. He might not always be a staunch friend to Prussia, but he could have no reason to spare Napoleon. He could never hope to make his subjects understand that he was really waging a defensive war, and therefore he would be accused of having shed their blood in vain if he did not offer them vengeance. England also inclined, though not decidedly, to the warlike side. Lord Castlereagh writes on November 1st that

> The English nation is likely to view with disfavour any peace which does not confine France strictly within her ancient limits, indeed peace with Bonaparte on any terms would be far from popular.....We still are ready to encounter with our Allies the hazards of peace, if peace can be made on the basis proposed, satisfactorily executed; and we are not inclined to go out of our way to interfere in the internal government of France, however much we might desire to see it placed in more pacific hands. But I am satisfied we must not encourage our Allies to patch up an imperfect arrangement. If they will do so we must submit; but it should appear in that case to be their own act, not ours.

But for the Czar this war-party would have found itself greatly overmatched, and even as it was the opposite faction had won before Stein arrived in Frankfurt a victory which might have proved decisive. It had been resolved on November 9th to open negotiations with Napoleon through a certain St Aignan, a French diplomatist who had been taken prisoner after the Battle of Leipzig. The plan was that there should be no Armistice but that a Congress should meet at some place on the right bank of the Rhine, which should deliberate on the basis of giving to France her 'natural frontiers,' that is the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, to Germany freedom, to Spain her old dynasty, and to Italy and Holland independence under a form which was to be a subject of discussion. By this proposal Napoleon was allowed once more to decide his own destiny, as in the summer at the conclusion of the Armistice. After all his defeats, it was still at his option to remain not only a Sovereign, but the first Sovereign in Europe, with a position greater than had ever been held by Louis XIV. He flung away this chance as he had flung away the other.

As before, we are driven to explain his conduct by one of two hypotheses. Either his astonishing fortune had disturbed his power of calculation, or he was secretly conscious that he could not afford to make peace on disadvantageous terms. If he really thought it still possible to recover his Empire in Germany, his belief in his fortune must have degenerated into an insane superstition. He must have allowed himself to look for effects without causes, whether moral or material. It would explain every-

thing if we might suppose that he felt the impossibility of supporting himself on the throne if he should make peace without recovering his lost prestige. For surely it would have proved impossible. Can we imagine him reigning in tranquillity with his glory obscured, the victorious Allies threatening him, and the French reckoning up at their leisure losses to which there is nothing parallel in the history of war? It is remarked by Bernhardi that he does not actually appear to have doubted that he could make peace if he would, and that from his utterances it seems as if French opinion counted for nothing in his calculations. But surely we ought not to judge by his utterances. If he were really in the dilemma that he *could not* make peace, and could only succeed by war through some unheard-of turn of fortune, his language and his conduct would, I think, have been just what they were. He would spurn all negotiation, not as needless but as useless, and he would adopt a tone of gasconade in order to keep up the ardour of his generals against the lucky moment which would certainly arrive to such a favourite of fortune as he was.

Of course the interest of France went for nothing in these calculations. A patriot in Napoleon's place would have bitterly repented the excesses by which the secure conquest of the Revolution, acquired by so much devotion and heroism, had been brought into peril again. He would have said, Let France keep that at any rate, whatever happens to me. We instinctively feel that in the case of Napoleon such reflexions would have been quite out of character. It cost him nothing to sacrifice the fortune

of France to his own, or rather to an infinitesimal chance of bettering his own. His answer, dated Nov. 16th, accepted the proposal of a Congress and suggested that it should meet at Mannheim, but evaded the acceptance of the basis. A fortnight later he did indeed consent to allow Caulaincourt to begin negotiations on this basis, stipulating, however, that Jerome should remain in Westphalia, and that Germany should have no federal Constitution. But the tardy and perhaps illusory concession came too late. Before the year was out, the Treaty of Lunéville went after those of Tilsit and Pressburg, and when a little later the Congress did meet at Chatillon, it was on the basis of the frontier of 1792, that is, the cession by France of all that she had gained in 20 years of war, and her descent from an eminence which she might easily have maintained by moderation, and which it does not now seem possible for her ever to attain again.

The march of events had not paused while Napoleon was hesitating. Defection spread from the Rhenish Confederation to Holland. On Nov. 15th insurrection broke out in Amsterdam; the cry of *Oranje boven!* was heard again; on the 24th appeared the vanguard of Bülow's army, the army of the North; Arnheim was taken on the 30th, and the entry of the Prince of Orange followed on December 2nd. Meanwhile an Austrian army was making progress in Dalmatia, and fortresses were falling on the Weichsel, Oder, and Elbe; Dresden surrendered with a garrison of 36,000 men. All this could not fail to strengthen the war-party. Stein attributes its final victory to the determination of the Czar. He writes:

Austria was in favour of concluding a Peace on lenient terms, her communications with St Aignan were in this sense, and to her Allies she represented the probability and the danger of a popular war in France, and the use of the same means of defence by Landwehr and Landsturm, which had been resorted to in Germany. But the Emperor held it impossible that the peace could be lasting so long as Napoleon remained on the throne, and as he expressed this firm resolution there remained nothing but to consider the way of prosecuting the war.

We may be sure that Stein's advice supported Alexander in this resolution; Pertz goes further, and asserts that the resolution was a consequence of his advice, but for which a pernicious Peace would have been concluded. His authority for this statement is Eichhorn, who was much in Stein's society at this time. But did Eichhorn hear Stein positively assert it, or did he only conjecture from the tone of his language that the fact was so? Arndt tells us that Stein was systematically silent about his relations with the Czar, and it seems difficult to imagine that Eichhorn can have positively known more than that Stein's advice was decidedly in favour of war.

Not only the military history of the invasion, but even its political history lie outside the scope of this book, which confines itself as much as possible to German affairs. We shall be content therefore with the briefest indication of Stein's movements from the time when the Allies published their manifesto (December 1st) to the date of his departure from Paris, June 3rd. The Allies did not repeat the mistake they had made at the beginning of 1813 of allowing Napoleon four months to retrieve his losses. This time they only gave him a

month. The time was spent by Stein in the south-west of Germany. He left Frankfurt on December 18th, and after paying a short visit to the Czar at Carlsruhe went to Freiburg, where the head-quarters of the Allies now were. Here he was occupied with his administrative duties, particularly with the organisation of hospitals. When the invasion began, the three armies divided the Rhine between them. The Northern Army, nominally commanded by the Crown Prince of Sweden, advanced through Holland across the Lower Rhine; that which had been known as the Silesian Army, commanded by Blücher, took the Middle Rhine, and St Priest's division crossed near Stein's house at Nassau. But the Great Army under Schwarzenberg passed on December 21st into Switzerland, from whence they were to make their way to the high table-land of Langres. Alexander went to Basel, and Stein followed him on January 9th. Here he had a glimpse of Swiss politics, and negotiated with deputies from Geneva about the incorporation of their Republic into the Swiss Confederation. These republican and small-state affairs had a certain strangeness for the Imperial Baron. He writes to his wife: 'One is obliged, it must be confessed, to try and narrow one's view, to concentrate one's sight which was accustomed to range over great areas, if one would take an interest in affairs here. One cannot but be friendly to the people—honest, sensible, enlightened, respectable folk, and very pleasant society; only one cannot acquit them of losing sight of the great interest of all nations in their domestic squabbles.' And Pertz remembers to have heard him say, 'At

Geneva if you see a man at a window suddenly jump out, jump after him without hesitation; you will be sure to get at least 5 per cent. by it.'

The invasion brought with it a great enlargement of Stein's administrative functions. In addition to the territory of the Rhenish Confederation he had now to provide a Government for the territory occupied by the Allies within France. In Germany it had been a principal part of his task to levy troops from the territory occupied. The question now rose whether this should be attempted in the territories which had been incorporated with France from the Treaty of Lunéville, on the German Left Bank, or in Belgium. But for the feebleness of the patriotic sentiment in the Germany of that age the Allies might have found devoted soldiers among the Germans who had been forced for 11 years to call themselves Frenchmen. But it was not so; these populations had no sense of injury, and no attempt was now made to enlist them against their former rulers. It was only necessary therefore to provide an administration which should levy money and supplies for the invaders and guard the communications of their armies.

Stein divided the whole territory to be administered into three great regions, corresponding to the line of march of the three armies. These regions stretched from the Upper Rhine, Middle Rhine and Lower Rhine respectively towards Paris. An Austrian Governor-general was placed at Colmar to govern Alsace, another at Vesoul to govern the Departments of Doubs, Jura, Saône Supérieure, and Vosges; another was to govern Marne Supé-

rieure, Aube, Yonne and Côte d'Or; and it was intended to create a fourth government for Loiret, Loire and Cher, Nievre and Allier. In the region of the Middle Rhine Justus Gruner was placed at Treves to govern the Departments of Donnersberg, Saar, Rhine and Mosel; and Alopäus at Nancy for Meurthe, Meuse, Mosel and Ardenne; while two more governments were planned for Marne, Seine and Marne, Aisne and Ardenne, and for Seine and Oise, Oise, Eure and Loire. In the region of the Lower Rhine Sack was placed at Aachen to govern Roer, Urthe, and Meuse Inférieure; another Governor-general seated at Brussels governed Sambre and Meuse, Dyle and Jemappe; and two more governments were planned for Nord and Pas de Calais, and for Somme and Seine Inférieure.

Here is a letter to the Frau vom Stein, in which these arrangements are referred to:

Chaumont, January 30th. You see from the date of my letter that we are making progress, and are on the way to Babylon. We hope to arrive soon. Will you come to us then? Pozzo is here; he is thoroughly constant, noble, well-disposed, energetic, full of intelligence and counsel; he is of the greatest service, and begs to be remembered to you. Laharpe (the Czar's tutor) is a man of much intelligence and experience, his appearance is agreeable and inspires confidence.

What do you say to it, my love? I, declared an outlaw and enemy of the French by Napoleon, am busy in organising governments for twenty conquered Departments, am sending Alopäus to Nancy as Governor of Meurthe, Mosel, Meuse and Ardenne, and proposing Sternberg to cooperate with me at Paris. Does not all this strike you as very extraordinary?

He did not, however, look back afterwards with any great satisfaction to his French administration. He writes:

The execution of these arrangements on the Left Bank of the Rhine and in Belgium was free from difficulty on account of the detestation which the inhabitants felt for the French; these territories accordingly were turned to the profit of the Allies. It was otherwise in France; here the inhabitants offered the greatest resistance to the arrangements which it was necessary to make, Napoleon having removed all administrative authorities; the payment of taxes fell in a great measure into abeyance; the insurrections of the country people which broke out in many of the Departments which were occupied, *for example in Lorraine*, and the short continuance of the administration, which was dissolved again, and authority given back to France by a Convention dated April 23d, 1814, did not allow anything to acquire any stability.

Stein's account of the campaign in France is as follows:

In January, 1814, at Langres, Lord Castlereagh, the principal English Minister, arrived in the Head-quarters. The Emperor Alexander was still embittered against Metternich, who however ruled Nesselrode and Hardenberg. To prevent Castlereagh from falling under the same influence I recommended his brother Sir Charles Stuart, with whom I had been on friendly terms since Dresden, to warn him not to yield altogether to Metternich's influence, and so lose the Emperor's confidence, which it was important that he should acquire in order to frustrate an idea the Emperor had conceived of giving Bernadotte a ruling position in France. Stuart betrayed this confidential communication to Metternich, who spoke of it to the Emperor and maliciously named me. The latter said to me at dinner that I had said something to his disadvantage, and later at Paris he referred to it again.

Castlereagh united with Metternich to keep the Emperor from advancing further into France, and Hardenberg and Nesselrode worked on the same side. The Emperor declared he would continue the war alone and without foreign help, and asked the King how he would decide. The King stated his objections, but at the same time said he would not desert him. Both sovereigns went to Chaumont, and here they soon got the news of Napoleon's advance upon Brienne; they hurried thither, and the Battle of

La Rothière was fought on February 2nd, 1814; its consequence was the advance to Troyes and Nangis.

Austria wanted peace and the negotiations at Chatillon began; those who held to the impossibility of a permanent peace with Napoleon and the necessity of a vigorous prosecution of the war, of whom I was one, were censured by the Austrians as exalted and fanatical; thus for instance the Imperial Privy Councillor Baldacy expressed himself in my presence, and tried to demonstrate to me the necessity of peace on account of the exhaustion of the armies.

The Conferences at Chatillon began on Feb. 6th: Prince Schwarzenberg relaxed his military operations (the Emperor Francis forbade him, the general of an *allied* army, to march on the right bank of the Seine): Napoleon took advantage of this to fall on the corps of Blücher's army, which were stationed in a very isolated condition on the Marne, and beat them. This increased the anxiety for peace: the few who voted for war, particularly Pozzo di Borgo and myself, were treated with bitterness: the Emperor himself wavered and wished for an armistice. Once more Napoleon's presumption caused him to neglect the opportunity of a peace which would have been glorious to him but dangerous to Europe and particularly to Austria, and the negotiations at Chatillon came to a stand. Meanwhile the Allied armies had left Troyes and retreated to Vandœuvre. In a Conference there it was determined that Blücher's army with which Bülow's army corps had been united should be brought up to 100,000 by the addition of that of Winzingerode, and that it should be put in a condition to assume the offensive. The plan was enthusiastically embraced by the resolution of Blücher, Gneisenau and Grolmann, they disregarded the counter-order to join Schwarzenberg which came later, and the glorious result is well known.

At the end of January the Count d'Artois appeared in Vesoul and was very coldly received by the inhabitants and the Allies; the latter regarded him as a hindrance to peace: the Emperor Alexander had a repugnance to the Bourbons. He was not allowed to adopt any decided measures and lived accordingly in great retirement, sending Count François d'Escars to the Headquarters at Troyes early in February. I supported his cause on all occasions, regarding the restoration of the Bourbons as the

effect of their hereditary right to the French throne, which had not been extinguished in any valid manner, and was to be maintained in all circumstances; all other solutions, such as a completely new dynasty—there being no eminent man towering above all others who might be the founder of it—or a regency of Marie Louise with Bernadotte appointed guardian—considering the danger of a long minority and the absence of any esteem for or confidence in Bernadotte since his ambiguous behaviour in 1813 and 1814—as absolutely inadmissible. The Count d'Artois went to Nancy, and I recommended him to H. v. Alopäus who had been appointed Governor there by me, and authorized him to make a grant of money. The war continued with great vigour through February and March, the balance at last inclining to the side of the Allies, who won the victories of Laon (March 10th) and Arcis sur Aube (20th and 21st). Napoleon's advance on St Dizier, the insurrection of the country people in Lorraine and part of Champagne provoked by the oppression of the war, forced the Head-quarters, where the Emperor Francis and all the diplomatists were, to hasten from Bar sur Aube by Chatillon to Dijon.

Here appeared Matthieu de Montmorency and Montagnac, who had left Paris secretly, commissioned by their friends to inform themselves of the condition of the armies, which was carefully concealed from them; they thought Bernadotte was threatening the capital with his army, and were not a little astonished to come upon Blücher's army by the Marne, and here to learn from General Gneisenau the condition of the armies, and that Bernadotte lay near Liège. They came to Dijon and acquainted the Ministers of the Allies who were there and myself with the views and purposes of the parties in Paris, and then with the information they had obtained hastened back to those who had sent them.

As soon as the news of the capture of the capital was brought to the Emperor Francis by Count Szezeny, I hastened to the Emperor Alexander, and found him not quite content with the turn so favourable to the Bourbons that things were taking. By his influence, and in consequence of his wish to show only magnanimity and avoid the appearance of revenge, France obtained a very favourable peace; she kept Strassburg which is so necessary for Germany's safety, and even acquired an increase of territory

and was exempted from all war-indemnity, though she had levied such great sums in Germany, Austria and Prussia, and though the inhabitants of these countries had a right to expect a diminution of their war-taxes.

Throughout this narrative we see Stein preserving his usual tone. He claims to have achieved nothing; he does not profess to estimate the extent of his own influence. Yet as before what he counsels is the thing that is done. While others hesitate his voice is uniformly for continuing the war, and the war is continued and ends in complete success.

He is also for the restoration of the Bourbons, and the Bourbons were restored. Here we find him disagreeing with his great patron and allying himself with England. It is implied in what he says about Lord Castlereagh, that he had very early an understanding with England on this point. We learn besides that he received in January a communication from the Russian Ambassador in London, conveying to him directly, and not to Nesselrode, the desire of the Prince Regent and Lord Liverpool to see the Bourbons restored, and by the pains which he takes in the above narrative to mention the services he rendered to the Count d'Artois we see the interest he took in the question. That he believed his exertions in the cause to have produced their effect drops out in a letter to Gagern (Sept. 3rd, 1825). 'During this time,' he writes, 'I enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor Alexander, and by this means I had influence in many affairs, for example, steady perseverance in the war, restoration of the Bourbons, etc.'

It does not follow because the restored Bourbons

have since failed to maintain themselves, that it was a mistake to restore them. It was unfortunate that their restoration seemed like a triumph of Legitimism, whereas it was not as a usurper that Napoleon was dethroned, but as an aggressor upon foreign nations. The question for Stein was not to find an unobjectionable course, but to choose the course which was least objectionable. The practical choice was between the Napoleons and the Bourbons. Had Napoleon himself been out of the way his dynasty might have been preferable, but it seemed impossible to exclude him and keep his family. Stein was evidently altogether impatient of the Czar's fancy for Bernadotte.

Stein arrived in Paris on April 9th, which, as he remarks, was the anniversary of his arrival in Dresden, and felt now for the first time that his own deliverance and that of Europe was secure. 'Only when I compare,' he writes, 'the feeling that begins to pervade my whole being with that of oppression and suffering which has held me for nine years (this goes back, it will be noticed, beyond the Battle of Austerlitz), only this comparison enables me to estimate the degree of my present happiness and of my past suffering.'

And thus we close 'this interesting passage in Stein's life.' Reckoning from his arrival in Königsberg, it covers a period about as long as his Prussian Ministry, and it is far more full of striking incident. If I have compressed the narrative of it into less than half the space this has been because I neither wished nor was able to travel so far from Germany, and go so deep into Russian, French and English

history as a complete account of the fall of Napoleon would require. It has also been because Stein, whom I have selected as the most central figure of the German politics of that age, is during this year less near the centre than usual. He was not allowed the position to which he had a certain right, that of principal leader and manager of the rising of Germany. Hence in my narrative the most memorable German occurrence of the year is necessarily almost passed over, I mean the *lèvée en masse* of Prussia. For this Stein had worked in 1808, and yet he was not allowed to take part in it. He was allowed to appear in Königsberg and give the signal, but then he was called away. The Prussian legislator had in this respect the same lot as the legislator of the Jews.

Some fatality seemed always to dash this cup from his lip. In 1809 he had been disappointed by the King's irresolution and by Napoleon's Decree of Proscription; this time the rising of Germany actually took place and triumphed over all opposition, and when Stein came to Breslau with Alexander's testimonial his hand must have seemed to touch the golden prize. But it was not to be. Those who had laboured most for Prussia in 1808 were forbidden to enter into the full fruition of 1813. Scharnhorst indeed was not allowed even to see the triumph, and Stein, who had gone forth bearing good seed, looked on from a distance, while *others* returned with joy, bringing their sheaves with them.

I may mention that this reflexion which the history suggests is not made by Stein himself. Not

one word of complaint or regret is to be found in any of his letters. And if he does not complain that he has not been allowed a larger share in the work, still less does he regret the loss of deserved fame. Yet it is somewhat melancholy that in the great story of the liberation of Germany the one man whose heart was truly in the cause, and who represented Germany alone, is little mentioned. Prussian writers have little occasion to name him, Austrians are hostile to him, Russians are jealous of him. Yet there is little exaggeration in the words of Uwaroff quoted above, 'He wanted the liberation of Germany, and was unquestionably the principal author of it.'

Let us leave him for a moment in Paris, where Gneisenau thus describes him on the 11th May:

> Herr vom Stein is as brilliant as ever, and, provoked as he has been by frequent contradiction, a little more prickly and irritable. We are much indebted to him. Maybe without him the Russian armies would never have crossed the Memel. How well-disposed he is to Prussia will not be known till later.

PART VIII.

STEIN AT THE CONGRESS.

'Das liebe, heil'ge Röm'sche Reich
Wie hält's nur noch zusammen?'
Ein garstig Lied! Pfui! ein politisch Lied!
Ein leidig Lied! Dankt Gott mit jedem Morgen,
Dass ihr nicht braucht für's Röm'sche Reich zu sorgen.

Faust.

CHAPTER I.

PARTIES AT THE CONGRESS.

It seldom happens that men pass so consciously out of one age into another as they did in April, 1814, when Napoleon fell and the Bourbons returned. Not more evidently did a new age commence in 1789 when the States-General met than the same age now suddenly closed. It did not close by the satisfactory solution of the problems which had occupied Europe; on the contrary, nothing could be more evidently unstable and provisional than the settlement accepted both in France and Germany. But it closed by exhaustion. The period which from the beginning had been full of energy had become at last so intense and overwrought that the spring, so to speak, now broke. Just as the Terror ceased with the fall of Robespierre from an irresistible change in public feeling, so with the fall of Napoleon passed away the vehemence and violence of the revolutionary age. 'Take the sword away,' was now the word, and repose and languor succeeded to restless activity.

Stein was 57 years of age; his public life had lasted 34 years; and the intensity of the period had come home to him more than to most others for the last seven years. The hour of rest for the world struck just when he was disposed to seek rest for himself. His old age begins. Whatever struggles may remain for the nations he feels that they do not much concern him, for not only has he a right to keep aloof from them, but they are scarcely likely to begin till he has quitted the scene. The lull may be expected to last till he has exchanged the retirement of old age for another retirement, even more still and complete. If he felt this, his presentiment was nearly fulfilled, but not quite.

Not that he looks forward to an inactive old age or to retirement from politics. We shall find that it was only by slow degrees and unwillingly that he came to acknowledge his public life to be over. But from the European stage, from diplomacy which he had never liked, and from war of which he had had enough, he is glad to retire. Henceforth he hopes to be allowed to live as a German among Germans. But this could not be till one other task was performed. The citizen just relieved from the fear of an enemy thundering at the city walls, or an earthquake, or a conflagration in the next house, before he gives himself up to enjoyment must repair the cracks in his walls or the damage of shells in the roof. Germany and Prussia were at last saved, but they were left in a most ruinous condition. They wanted not merely repair, for it was impossible to restore the fabric to its original form, but extensive alteration, as well as new safeguards against danger. What

he writes to his wife after seeing his home again—he arrived at Nassau on June 10th, welcomed, though it was near midnight, with the ringing of bells, and, most appropriately, with the Landsturm drawn up on both sides of the road—might be applied to Germany at large: 'The house wants great repairs, the wing is scarcely habitable. I have sent for the builder Delessaux from Coblenz, a clever and agreeable young man. . . . Marianne is to get us a gardener;—very necessary on account of the neglected condition of the garden and the plantations; many fine trees are lost.' In the coming Congress the political builders were to deliberate on similar repairs necessary to make Germany habitable and safe. Stein was to take part in these deliberations; afterwards nothing would remain for him but to live as comfortably and usefully as possible in the repaired building.

Early in this narrative we described the fall of Germany and the fall of Prussia. We have now seen both countries, the larger and the smaller, free themselves by a great effort from the foreign dominion which had been the immediate consequence of the failure of their institutions. But to prevent the same calamity from happening again they have as yet done nothing except—what was certainly a considerable thing—to destroy the military monarchy in France, which had inflicted it upon them. It remained to correct the faults in their own system which laid them open to French invasion. What these faults were they had at least learned clearly enough. The war of 1793—1795 had shown that, the defence of Germany being thrown upon itself

by the decay of the Netherlands and the disappearance of the old Barrier, the Germanic system was unequal to the task, having no means of raising an army directly for the purpose, and being prevented by the perpetual jealousy between Austria and Prussia from availing itself freely of the armies of those Powers. The war of 1805 had next shown that the Middle and Small States in their defencelessness were irresistibly tempted to side with the invader, and that with their help he had it in his power to humble and all but subjugate Austria and Prussia themselves. In the war of 1806 it had been proved that Prussia was not merely not available for the defence of Germany, but that her military strength was less real and substantial than had been supposed. Such were the lessons of experience.

Reform had already been applied to Prussia. The commencement of a new system had been made there, and with such success, that in the war of 1813 the country had laid a new foundation of greatness, which seemed likely to prove surer, because it was much broader, than the old. It remained to find a remedy for the other evil, that is, either to devise some system by which all the military resources of Germany could be requisitioned for the purpose of national defence, or else to make the armies of Prussia and Austria available in a satisfactory way for the defence of Germany.

This reform had not only been proved to be needful by the occurrences of the last period, but those occurrences had themselves made the need of it far greater. Through the greater part of the 18th century Germany had had the same defective

system, and yet no evil had followed. This was because France had not become aware of her advantage, and also because as a military power she was then in a state of decline. Now on the contrary she was awakened and regenerated, and had learnt how much was possible. For the moment indeed she had to confess herself exhausted, but on the whole, she laid down her arms with the conviction that her only mistake was to have gone too far, and that her policy of conquest had not been mistaken in itself. We ought particularly to note the distinction she made between one part of her conquests and another. The purely Napoleonic acquisitions, the despotic Protectorate of the Rhenish Confederation, still more the Westphalian Kingdom, and the 32nd Military Division, these she gave up as lost, and had no strong desire to recover. It was quite different in respect to the Rhine frontier. In losing this she felt herself robbed, not merely because it was what she called a natural frontier, but because she had had the undisputed possession of it for so long a time. The conquests of Lunéville were not Napoleonic in the proper sense of the word, they were the conquests of the Revolution, sealed by several years of continental peace before Napoleon's career of universal conquest began. They had become a part of France, they had not been separated again from her by any effort of their own populations, nay, it had not even been thought safe to allow those populations any share in their own liberation. With respect to these provinces then the French had the same sort of feeling that they have since had with respect to Alsace and Lorraine, a feeling that they

had acquired a right of property in them, and that it was only as an indemnity, or as a punishment, and not in the name of justice that they had been required to yield them up. Hence the settlement of 1815 contained the germ of a new war between France and Germany, a war to recover the lost Departments of the Left Bank. It was the belief that this war was on the point of breaking out that afflicted Niebuhr after the Revolution of 1830, and we know now that he was no false prophet, but that he only, like so many prophets, antedated the occurrences that he foresaw. Moreover, if France could not forget her rights in Germany, a large part of Germany had formed new ties with France. The habit of looking to Paris had grown up, and in the absence of any Germanic patriotism had met with no counteraction. What in the people was a passive habit was in the princes and officials an active partisanship. Princes like the King of Würtemberg, Ministers like Montgelas, sided openly and heartily with France against Germany, and if the time should come when either France should ask their help, or they should feel the pressure of Prussia and Austria too painfully, they would be likely either to second, or to provoke, a new French invasion of Germany. All these dangers were new; they had been unknown before the war-time, and were the results of those very occurrences which had revealed for the first time the dangers inherent in the Germanic Constitution.

On the other hand the danger from France, though so real, did not seem imminent. Her defeat and the downfall of Napoleon were lessons impres-

sive enough to keep her quiet for a good while. In like manner the Rhenish Confederation had received a chastisement which was not exactly light, if below its deserts. Examples had been made of the King of Saxony and of Dalberg, and Bavaria might feel that she had escaped somewhat narrowly. Moreover Germany had securities for the present in the continued existence and authority of the Coalition by which Napoleon had been put down, and in the weakness of the French Government. Patriotic German statesmen might not be satisfied with such securities, but scarcely any such statesmen existed. There were scarcely any public men whose business it was to consider the interests of Germany; the matter was weighed exclusively by those whose position forced them to give precedence to some other interest, that of Austria or Prussia or some Middle State. A Metternich, or even a Hardenberg, looked upon a new French invasion of Germany as inconvenient, less in itself than from the lowering of the Austrian or Prussian position which they had found to be the consequence of it; the former at least, as we have seen, had not greatly cared to wrest from France her Rhine frontier. As for the Ministers of the Middle States, it was doubtful whether they regarded it as inconvenient at all.

Add to the fact that the protection of Germany by a new constitution was no one's special business the extreme intrinsic difficulty of the problem, and we shall be prepared to find the efforts of the Congress to solve it as abortive as they actually were. What appeared necessary was to create an effective federal

authority to which Austria, Prussia, and the Middle States should all alike be prepared to submit. But how could Austria or Prussia, European Great Powers, complete in themselves and well able to stand alone, consent to forego any part of their sovereignty? They could hardly be asked to do so. The Middle States might indeed fairly be asked, but were scarcely more likely to consent. They hugged their sovereignty as their latest acquisition, as that for which they had sacrificed their good fame. Yet states can no more form a federation without sacrificing part of their sovereignty than individuals can form a state while they retain the *liberum veto*. Moreover, an arrangement so extremely difficult in itself was not to be left, as for instance the similar problem of federation had been left on the other side of the Atlantic, in the hands of the parties immediately interested. The settlement of Germany was part of the settlement of Europe, and the other Great Powers, ignorant and careless of German interests, had a voice in it along with the leading German States. The claims of Prussia were supported by Russia, those of Hannover by England, and those of Bavaria and Würtemberg by France.

But besides a new constitution for Germany, the Congress would have to consider another question, which German patriots such as Stein perceived, and all may now perceive, to be scarcely less important, viz., the indemnities to be assigned to Prussia. It was the more important because of the almost hopeless difficulty of arranging a satisfactory constitution. If Germany could not protect herself against

France by federation, there was an alternative. Prussia might be made strong and great enough to undertake her defence. The feasibility of this plan made the indemnities of Prussia more important than those which might be assigned to any other Power. It mattered comparatively little where Austria might look for hers, although this was not then so clearly understood, for Austria being only partially German could not, as Campo Formio ought to have made evident, be safely entrusted with the defence of Germany. But if the indemnities of Prussia should be large, and, what was equally important, if they should be such as to identify her interests still more with those of Germany, then a satisfactory federal constitution might more easily be dispensed with, and the prospect would open of protecting Germany by constituting her gradually not into a federal but into a unitary state.

Now that the German question has been well-nigh solved, we may see that in each stage the aggrandisement of Prussia has advanced it as much as the essays towards federation that have been made. Frederick's conquests went together with the League of Princes in one age, and in another the North German Confederation was preceded by the annexation to Prussia of Schleswig-Holstein, Hannover, Electoral Hessen, Nassau, and Frankfurt. In like manner the result of the Congress of Vienna to Germany was twofold. It created a new German Federation, and it gave a large territorial aggrandisement to Prussia, an aggrandisement which, more by good fortune than by Prussian forethought, was such as to make Prussia more German than before.

The Congress dealt with a vast variety of questions, but on the whole its great work was the reconstitution of Germany and Prussia; this at least was the work which cost most trouble and anxiety, the work which gives the Congress a history. Fortunately also it was the work in which alone Stein took an active part, so that we shall be able in this narrative to preserve silence about all the other proceedings of the Congress.

Stein passed the summer between his home at Nassau and Frankfurt. He was occupied chiefly in preparing for the labours of the Congress. With Hardenberg, who also came to Frankfurt, he elaborated a scheme of a German Constitution which we shall soon have to examine, and he prepared the public mind for the approaching changes, partly as usual through the pen of Arndt, who wrote at this time a pamphlet, 'On Government by Estates,' partly through the well-known publicist Joseph Görres, at this time editor of the Rhenish Mercury, which appeared at Coblenz. He was also attentively watching Saxony and its Governor-General, Prince Repnin, for whose proceedings he was still responsible as Chief of the Central Department. At this moment Saxony was the most important part of Germany, both as the country where Prussia hoped to find her indemnity, and as the State in which the doctrine of legitimism and the sacredness of the Napoleonic Sovereignty were to be tested. In these critical months its population was naturally divided into parties, some pressing for the King's restoration, some urging the claims of the Duke of Weimar, some favouring annexation to Prussia. Stein, as

we know, had from the beginning favoured this latter plan, and he was now only anxious to put an end to the period of suspense. On June 21st he writes to Hardenberg:

Enclosed I have the honour to send your Excellency a copy of a report of Prince Repnin on an attempt made by several respectable members of the Saxon Estates to procure the King's restoration through a deputation to be sent to the head-quarters. He has rejected the proposal and taken various measures to check the agitation. It is highly probable that this movement has been caused by foreign influence, that those who made a similar attempt in December, 1813, and who afterwards wished to set up the Duke of Weimar, now after the failure of the latter scheme recur to the former. Only one way is left to put an end to this state of things, the consequences of which are not to be foreseen, namely, a public decision of the fate of Saxony by which all hope of a return to the old regime will be quashed. The delay is exceedingly mischievous; the Saxons, always fickle, vain, and frivolous, waver backwards and forwards between various opinions, expectations, anxieties and influences from without, grow more and more skilled in intrigues and cabals, and wean themselves more and more from all respect for a legal Government and from the habit of obedience.

Arndt's reminiscences of these months are vivid.

I was sitting in my carriage on a drive from Frankfurt to Mainz, when he, travelling post, met me near Höchst, and made as if he would drive by. I recognized him at once; General Boyen was sitting with him in the carriage; he recognized me, and called out, 'Right about! Quick march! Back with me to Frankfurt!' I obeyed, and very soon sat at dinner with him and Boyen and the gallant General Kleist-Nollendorf at the Roman Emperor. He ordered the best Elfer wine, and we drank and clinked our glasses. All the while he stayed there he was unusually bright and cheerful, and—in his way—gentle too. Even if much had not turned out to his wish, still he could feel almost like a victorious Triumphator; besides,

he had had the happiness of seeing for some days again his old Nassau with his own wife and children.

Then come one or two little anecdotes:

Stein had grown to be a great German celebrity. People sought him, invited and uninvited, and sometimes were found assembled in the evening round his tea-table. This tea-table stood usually in a pleasant garden on the way to Bornheim, where he had fixed his residence for the summer. Here appeared, among others, the Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria (afterwards the celebrated art-patron), inflamed like Stein with the most ardent zeal for a new free Germany, and at home a declared opponent of his father's Minister, Count Montgelas. The Prince, so devoted to the German Fatherland, and so friendly and amiable, would sometimes take me by the arm and move quickly with me through the garden-walks. The young man being very deaf, his words would sound audibly beyond the garden-hedge, and mine too perhaps for that matter, for I am no whisperer or soft-speaker. The consequence was that the people, who besides were eager to see the famous Stein and a Crown Prince, would form groups and stand still on the promenade by the garden; till Stein called out, 'This way, Your Royal Highness, come and cool your enthusiasm with a cup of tea. You speak so loud that the people stand still and fancy I hold a Jacobin Club here.'

The point of this remark, as appears more clearly in another version of the anecdote which Arndt gave to Pertz, is that the Prince's conversation was apt to consist of furious attacks upon his father's Government.

Schlosser, now at Heidelberg (the celebrated historian), then a teacher in the Frankfurt gymnasium, visited the Minister one day. STEIN. 'Well, my dear Schlosser, how goes it among your Frisians in the Jever country?' SCHLOSSER. 'Badly enough, your Excellency, as everywhere else in Germany, but still a good deal better than elsewhere; we have only free peasants with us and not a single nobleman.' STEIN (laughing heartily). 'Ah! you mean to say that the peasants have murdered them all or driven them all away. But we two do not murder each other.'

A Count Walbot-Bassenheim introduced himself with a solemn recital of all his titles, beginning with Superior Seneschal of the Imperial Liberty of Friedberg; Stein pushes a chair towards him in a great hurry, saying, 'Pray sit down, Count; I have not chairs enough for all the great people you introduce to me.'

To Stein, as we have already seen, the German cause was so sacred that he applied to it the apostolic maxim, 'If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.' One day when he had dined at the banker's Metzler, as they sat at coffee, Marshal Wrede was announced. Stein jumps up and calls for his carriage; Metzler remonstrates, but in vain. 'I will not sit in the same room with the cursed robber,' cries Stein, rushing out. According to Arndt the word 'robber' was meant literally. Wrede, when quartered in the Duke of Brunswick's castle of Oels, had, in imitation of some of Napoleon's Marshals, packed up and carried off all the plate, and Stein, as Chief of the Central Department, had had the pleasure of making him pay the value.

And now Arndt takes us to visit the Minister at Nassau.

There he was extremely cheerful and merry, and went about over hill and dale with me and his two daughters, of whom Henriette was already grown up (she was just eighteen) and Therese a little wilful slip of a girl (she was eleven). The pretty wilful little Therese, who was always for making jumps, and who delighted her father heartily by her innocent wildness, I had often to carry in my arms over little brooks and ditches, and once it happened that she tried to show what she could do on her own feet, and much to papa's amusement left a little shoe sticking in the mud.... Here too was Stein's sister Marianne, a true counterpart of her brother, but in duodecimo. Only she was a woman, in everything more considerate and gentle; the same brevity and

rapidity in speech, the same unconscious smiting wit; her figure small, and that too shortened and shrunk, the head already sprinkled with the snow of age, but out of it looked a grand pair of flashing eyes. She was a learned Deaness who might well have played the schoolmistress to her girls, and instituted an Examinatorium and a Disputatorium on the old Constitution of Germany. She knew the old German Rules and Constitutions not merely with exactness, but carried them living in her heart. She was nearly ten years older than her brother[1] and had ruled house and land with her mother when he was still a wild boy, and had helped, as he used to say, to educate him and to tame his fiery spirit. He regarded her with a sort of reverence, and I heard him once say when he complained of his own heat and irritability—made a sort of attack upon himself—'But for my pious mother and my equally pious and good sister Marianne, a very complete villain might have been made out of me.' It was his way to speak thus in superlatives.

Among the born subjects of the House of Stein there was naturally much exultation when their Knight returned conqueror, as they thought, of his malignant enemy the world-conqueror Napoleon. One day when he entertained some Russian guests the party strolled out in the evening to look at the Burg Stein. There at the limit which divided the lands of Stein from those of Nassau they found an extraordinary construction—a representation of scenes from the war, the conflagration of Moscow, the French in flight, the battle of Leipzig—executed in rock-work, with Stein's name and coat of arms, as if all the achievements were his. It was the fancy of an old mason of Nassau, who had been a playmate of Stein's boyhood. Naturally Stein was annoyed. He got in a rage and vowed that the masterpiece must be instantly taken away. Marianne was deeply con-

[1] She was only five years older according to Stein's letter to Arndt of Nov. 6th, 1830. See Pertz, VI. p. 1021.

cerned for the poor mason, begged Arndt to intercede, and the guests combining their influence procured a reversal of the hard sentence from Stein, who went away muttering that 'people would think he was in his dotage and fancied himself to have conquered the world.'

In the middle of July Stein had visited the Czar at Bruchsal, where Alexander rejoined his family after his visit to London, and had received his commands to go to Vienna for the Congress. He was to retain his old position of unofficial adviser to the Czar, especially on German affairs, and to exert whatever influence upon the proceedings of the Congress his character might procure for him, without a vote and without the power of any state to back him. He left Frankfurt on September 8th, and reached Vienna on the 15th, where he remained through almost the whole continuance of the Congress, occupying a large and splendidly furnished, but excessively gloomy, house.

He lost no time in making his voice heard, glad perhaps to do so before the French Embassy should have arrived. On the 17th he laid before the Russian Cabinet a paper on the best method of conducting the business of the Congress, in which he strongly urged the desirableness of allowing the Germans to arrange their internal constitution without foreign, especially without French, interference.

The affairs of Germany (he writes) demand the most mature and exact consideration on account of the intricacy both of its internal and its foreign relations. The scheme of a Federal Constitution for the whole and of the arrangement of the parts must be adopted with exact knowledge of the rights of the Princes and

their subjects, since it is to secure the political existence of both alike. When the foundations of the Constitution are settled, the individuals interested may be heard, their objections discussed, and they will be bound afterwards to accept the decision of the Great Powers.

The interference of France in the internal affairs of Germany must be prevented in the most effectual manner. The history of five centuries proves it—her policy has had no other object than to create division and foment agitation, and unfortunately it has found only too ductile material in the selfishness and perfidiousness of the princely Cabinets of Germany. The bondage to which they reduced themselves, the sufferings they brought on the Fatherland, have not yet brought them to a sense of their duty; they are much more concerned to maintain their illegally acquired sovereignty and to obtain a territorial aggrandisement than to occupy themselves with the great interests of the nation whose chiefs they consider themselves to be; and they continue to resort to every means of attaining their contemptible object.

Russia has already announced in the Proclamation of Kalisch, April 25th, the course she intends to take in the internal affairs of Germany; she will commit the decision of them to the German Powers, and will merely furnish a guarantee and a protection against oppression. While she publicly adopts this principle as her guide she will obviate the immediate encroachment of France upon the internal affairs of Germany, and at the same time retain the influence which gratitude and admiration procure for the great and august Prince who rules her.

If this mode of action is adopted the decision of the constitutional and territorial questions will be committed to Hannover, Prussia and Austria; the result would be brought in the last resort to the knowledge of the Allied Courts, that they may estimate it according to the principles of the European Balance; and by the adoption of this course the direct interference of France will be prevented.

This paper shows that Stein clearly foresaw the danger which immediately threatened Germany. He saw that France had not fallen with Napoleon, but was likely even to recover political influence by his

fall, retaining as she did the enormous prestige which he had given her, retaining also the secret adhesion of the Rhenish Princes, and at the same time disarming the hostility of Europe, and placed in a condition to divide the Great Powers and procure influential alliances by the consequences of his abdication. Stein's advice was partially adopted. In a preliminary meeting of September 22nd—for the Conference had not yet formally commenced—it was resolved by the representatives of the four Powers, Austria, Prussia, Russia and England, that German affairs should be separated from European, and that a German Committee should be appointed to consider them. But in the constitution of the Committee they departed in a very significant manner from Stein's proposal. In his view everything depended on shutting out the representatives of the Napoleonic sovereignty, and on putting Prussia in a condition to hold her own against Austria. By proposing that the Committee should consist of the representatives of Austria, Prussia and Hannover only, he had, as it were, put forward England, or England-Hannover, as a kind of umpire between Austria and Prussia. Even this scheme would probably give Austria the advantage, for the Hannoverian politicians were jealous of Prussia, and the English were Austrian in feeling, but at least French influence would be effectually shut out. It was now resolved that the Committee should consist of the representatives of Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Hannover and Würtemberg; in other words, that two votes out of five should be given to the Rhenish Confederation.

The French Embassy arrived two days after,

and the real battle of the Congress soon began. The adroitness of Talleyrand's diplomacy has been much admired, but he had a very good hand, and it was not surprising that having watched from the very beginning the history of the Rhenish Confederation, having assimilated and partly even invented the Germanic policy of Napoleon, he should instinctively understand all the advantages of his situation. Talleyrand made the conquered Power for a moment the Arbiter of the Congress; but if it has surprised us all along that Napoleon should *not* have been able to divide a Coalition which seemed so loosely united, we cannot be at the same time surprised that Talleyrand *should*. We have seen that the firm agreement of Alexander and the Prussian war-party had formed during the war a solid nucleus. To this was added Frederick William's personal feeling for the Czar, which was now greatly heightened by gratitude. But we have seen also the same Czar conniving at Austria's successful intrigue with the Princes of the Rhenish Confederation. England had wavered a good deal, but had inclined on the whole towards Austria. So much division there had been in the Coalition, even while a common danger might have held them most firmly together. And now this common danger existed no longer, and to the four Powers which had conducted the war there were added at Vienna the party of the Napoleonic sovereignty, unwilling allies of the eleventh hour, and the conquered Power itself, France. It was not in itself any proof of astonishing skill that France should almost destroy an equilibrium so unstable.

All that was necessary was that she should pursue her habitual policy and lean on the Rhenish Confederation. Except through that she could have no title to interfere in Germany, but an opportunity offered of coming forward once more as its champion. Once more the rivalry of Austria and Prussia and the necessities of the small States were used by France to break up and enfeeble Germany.

It had been laid down in the Treaties that Prussia was to be reinstated in a territory approximately equal to that which she had possessed before the war of 1806. The reader must remember that this was very different from the territory possessed by Frederick the Great. The reign of Frederick William II. through the partitions of Poland, and the earlier years of Frederick William III. through the internal revolution in the Empire, had brought vast aggrandisements to Prussia. Part of the territory lost at Tilsit, for example that which had gone to make the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia and Duchy of Berg, could easily be restored. But there lay two difficulties in the way of restoring the whole. In the first place, a part of it had fallen into the hands, not of Princes who owed their existence to Napoleon, but of old German princely houses which could not so easily be displaced. The district of Cottbus had gone to Saxony, and those principalities of Baireuth and Ansbach in which, as we remember, Hardenberg had begun his career as a Prussian official, had passed to Bavaria. The latter territories, at any rate, in consequence of the terms which Austria had granted to Bavaria in the Treaty of Ried, it was now impossible to recover.

The second difficulty was still more serious. How could Prussia get back her Polish possessions? Let the reader consult the map and note how deep into the heart of the old Polish republic Prussia's acquisitions of New East Prussia and South Prussia had extended. Before the Treaty of Tilsit Warsaw itself had been for near ten years a Prussian town.

A secret had gradually come to light, similar to that which we remember to have surprised the world after the Italian war of 1859, when France claimed Savoy and Nice as the reward of her services to Italy. Russia hitherto had appeared to wage war without any personal object, and to be actuated either by a disinterested desire to liberate Europe or else by revenge; for few perceived that her advance into Germany in 1813 had saved her from losing again all the advantage over Napoleon which she had won in 1812. It was now discovered that she did not intend to go without a substantial reward. Alexander had a scheme curiously characteristic both of the man and of the phase of Liberalism which he represented, a scheme in the style of the French Revolution when it was verging towards Napoleonism but had not yet quite lost its sincerity. It might be ridiculed as simple spoliation varnished over with a profession of extraordinary virtue and self-sacrifice, and yet the profession was after all not purely hypocritical. He called it the restoration of Poland, a solemn atonement for the great crime of the Empress Catharine; and yet when it was examined it turned out to be a plan for getting possession of those parts of the Polish territory which Catharine had been obliged to leave to her

accomplices in the partition, as if her crime had consisted not in plundering Poland but in allowing others to share in the booty. On the other hand the fragments of Poland thus reunited were not to be annexed to Russia nor governed by Russians, though the Emperor was to take the title of Polish King, and moreover Poland was to have a Parliament. This at least was not Napoleonic; and when we consider how dangerous it might seem to set up a Parliament in Poland, when not only Russia but Austria and even Prussia had no Parliament, and yet that Alexander, in spite of all opposition, carried his plan through, we see that his profession of love for liberty was not merely hollow. But meanwhile, if the greater part of New East Prussia and South Prussia were wanted for the new kingdom of Poland, it would be necessary to find indemnities for Prussia elsewhere.

Thus then arose the question of the Congress. Both Alexander and Stein had long before suggested a solution. It was to give Saxony to Prussia. In itself this annexation would precisely meet the object in view, for Saxony was both contiguous to Prussia and it was Protestant. Since the first suggestion was made, circumstances had favoured the plan so much that the Prussian politicians seem for a long time to have made no doubt that it would be adopted. At the time when the Treaty of Kalisch was concluded, the Saxon Government had still a way of escape. Had Thielemann played the part of Yorck, and Frederick Augustus followed the example of Frederick William, had Saxony joined the Coalition, it would have been

impossible not to forgive the crimes of which that Government had been guilty since 1807. But Senfft's finesse and the King's superstitious reverence for Napoleon had played into the hands of Prussia. Saxony had not only gone with the other States of the Rhenish Confederation, but she had been so conspicuous above all others in treason against Germany, that if an example was to be made and the Rhenish Confederation judicially branded, the Saxon King was beyond comparison the fittest victim. With him, too, no engagements had been made; his territory had been conquered, and he himself made prisoner. It seemed as if fortune had worked zealously to remove the difficulties out of Prussia's way.

And at first it was not so much the proposed aggrandisement of Prussia as that of Russia which aroused jealousy. To the Great Powers it seemed as if Alexander aspired to succeed to Napoleon's position, the more so as his proposal had that dash of impudent hypocrisy which seemed borrowed from Napoleon. His scheme of a Parliament found no favour even with his own Ministers, and must have seemed to the neighbouring sovereigns like a deliberate attempt to begin a new French Revolution in the East of Europe. Let us hasten to inquire what Stein's views were.

On October 6th he laid the following paper before Alexander:

His Imperial Majesty desires

(1) A frontier in Poland on the side of Austria and Prussia which is threatening to those Powers.

(2) The consent of his allies to a constitution for Poland.

The frontier from Thorn by Kalisch to Krakau is threatening to Austria and Prussia; moreover, on the side of the latter in East and West Prussia it is a line with salient angles so strange and irregular that even in peace it would interfere with every administrative measure.

An administration which would constitute all Russian Poland into a political whole under the name of a Kingdom, divide it from Russia, and alter it into a State united with that Empire, would destroy the internal unity of the Government, impede its course, foster among the Russian Poles a desire to restore their independence, and in those Poles who will be left to the other Powers, a germ of fermentation and tendency to separation.

Such a condition of things would involve elements of discord between despotic Russia and constitutional Poland; the former will have a motive for jealousy in the distinction; it will be always ready to turn the union into incorporation; the latter will be restless about the maintenance of its rights, and its restlessness will take the lawless and revolutionary stamp of the nation, and the union will be followed either by separation or subjugation, which changes however will only be brought about through new convulsions.

Accordingly such a state of things is opposed to the general interest of Europe, which needs peace, to the magnanimous and benevolent views of the Emperor, and to the true sense of the engagements which he has taken to his Allies.

This Prince has but one object in the plan he has adopted, namely, to secure the happiness of the Poles and atone for the political injustice committed against them by his ancestors; his motives are pure and noble, all those who have taken part in that violent act should help to mitigate its pernicious consequences; and all that is necessary is to come to an understanding about the choice of means, and to avoid the danger, while we strive to return to the principles of justice for the benefit of the Poles, of departing from them in equally important points of policy and morality.

Let the Russian Poles receive public institutions which may secure them an independent share in the administration, ensure them against oppression and wrong measures, foster public spirit and give employment to their activity. The establishment of provincial administrations or provincial Estates in the Polish

provinces will secure to the Poles freedom of the person and of property, interest in the internal administration, a means of developing their moral and intellectual capacities. If they do not at this moment obtain the advantages of a general constitution they must make this sacrifice to the great interests of Europe, and to the gratitude they owe to the Allies who have broken the chains in which Napoleon held them; they must make this atonement for the culpable share they have had in their own misfortunes through three centuries of lawlessness and the corruption of their noblesse, which have been the causes of their political death. One of their greatest kings, Stephan Batori, said to them as early as the 16th century, 'Poles, you owe your preservation not to laws, for you know them not, nor to Government, for you respect it not; you owe it to nothing but chance!' This chance, or call it this Providence, they have wearied out, and so have passed under the yoke.

This paper gives us a high notion of the independence which Stein preserved in his relations with the Emperor; it goes so far as to hint that his favourite plan involves a breach of faith. His views were explained further in a personal conference which he had with Alexander on October 19th. Alexander said to him, 'You wrote to me about Poland; what makes you who display such a liberal way of thinking on all occasions make proposals of such a different kind on this subject? Stein's reply is reported as follows: 'Sire, I considered that the application of the principles must depend upon the nature of that to which they are applied, and I fear that you will find in this Poland nothing but a source of annoyance and inconvenience; it wants a Third Estate, which in all civilised countries is the guardian of the intelligence, morality, and wealth of the people; in Poland the Third Estate consists exclusively of an ignorant and ungovernable lower noblesse and of Jews; it is just the same want

of a Third Estate which checks you in your constitutional plans for Russia.' To this Alexander replied, 'True, and yet things went on very well in the Duchy of Warsaw.' 'Very imperfectly,' replied Stein, 'and then Napoleon kept a tight hold on them and forced them to move in a given track.' 'I shall know how to hold them in check,' said Alexander; 'and besides, I have not yet made any announcement about the way in which I mean to carry out my plan of giving institutions to this people, which has done so much to preserve its nationality.'

A conversation in which Alexander plainly betrays how much he had been struck by Napoleon's methods, and how he had it in view to imitate them.

On the whole, then, German affairs did not seem likely to receive a satisfactory settlement at the Congress. Neither a satisfactory Federal Constitution nor a satisfactory reconstruction of Prussia could be reached except through immense difficulties. How create an efficient Federation when Bavaria had already received an assurance that her sovereignty should be preserved intact, and when Metternich had declared his opinion that no Federation but only a system of alliances was wanted? How reconstruct Prussia when the Czar would not give back her Polish possessions, and yet Saxony could not be annexed without raising the most delicate questions, and that in the face of Austria, Prussia's watchful rival, and of France, long accustomed to find her advantage in the disunion of Germany? But the two difficulties were different in kind. The creation of the Constitution was hindered by a dull, passive resistance, which took all life and reality out of the

project; but the claims of Prussia excited bitter animosities which at one time threatened to burst out in a new European war. The plot of the drama, so to speak, turns on the Prussian claims. Accordingly, the general course of the history of the Congress is as follows. During the month of October and the first part of November the two questions are discussed together. The German Committee holds its meetings, and at the same time diplomatic notes on the subjects of Saxony and Poland pass and repass. At this time it is not the Prussian but the Russian claims that excite opposition. A change takes place after November 6th, when Alexander, by a personal appeal to Frederick William, disarms the opposition of Prussia, and procures her support. The dispute now shifts its ground and begins to centre in the Prussian claim to Saxony. In this stage it becomes much more threatening, and absorbs the attention of the diplomatists to such a degree that the German Committee ceases to hold its sittings. The rest of November, December, January, and part of February are occupied with the Saxon controversy, the agitation reaching its highest point in the conclusion on January 3rd of a secret Treaty between Austria, England, and France against the Allies of Kalisch, but gradually subsiding afterwards and at last disappearing in a compromise. Then follows the return of Napoleon, who lands in France on March 1st. March and April are necessarily occupied chiefly with the revival of the Coalition and with arrangements for the approaching campaign. May brings up again the question of the German Constitution, which is settled in a series of confer-

ences occupying the last days of the month, in the midst of which Stein leaves Vienna. The first half of June sees the winding up of the Congress, all its resolutions being collected into a Closing Act, which is signed on June 9th.

Of these successive phases the first, that which occupies the month of October, is altogether exceptional and abnormal. From the beginning of 1813 up to this time, and again from November onwards, the close adhesion of Prussia to Russia, and, symbolising it, the firm loyalty of Stein to Alexander, subsist as the firm basis of European policy. Austria stands throughout on the other side, jealous of this alliance and secretly tempting Alexander, not without some success, to betray it. England inclines to Austria, but without decision or clear purpose, and France now joins the same side in order to make mischief. But during this single month Prussia's adhesion to Russia is shaken. Alexander's designs upon Poland had just transpired, and his coquetting with France at the time of the Treaty of Paris had estranged the minds of the Prussian politicians. Stein who, considering his combative disposition, has hitherto lived in wonderful harmony with Alexander, now remonstrates firmly with him, and, as Alexander himself complained, 'sides with his enemies.' A new combination is now formed. Prussia joins Austria against Russia, and cherishes a vague hope of obtaining her own prize, that is Saxony, not by the help of Russia but from the gratitude of the other Powers as a reward for resistance to Russia's encroachments.

Did Hardenberg and Humboldt give themselves at this time a clear account of what they wanted? At any rate they can scarcely have had any conception of the opposition which awaited their designs upon Saxony. It is true that this opposition was as yet in a great degree dormant. Both England and Austria at this time acquiesced in their wish, but the latter at least with extreme and avowed reluctance. Metternich writes on October 22nd: 'The Emperor will see the annexation with great regret; it is desirable to reserve for the present King a nucleus on the Bohemian frontier; but if the complete annexation is necessary to the restoration of Prussia, Austria will only consent if at the same time the other German territorial questions are settled to her wish, and with reservation for future arrangement of certain points respecting the frontier, the fortification of certain places, trade, and the navigation of the Elbe.' The annexation then was only admissible if it was absolutely necessary. But what should make it necessary? Solely the determination of the Czar not to restore to Prussia her Polish possessions. How then could the Prussian diplomatists suppose that it would be still open to them to acquire Saxony if by coalescing with the other Powers they induced Russia to abandon her claims upon Poland? No doubt by such co-operation they would acquire a claim to the gratitude of their new Allies. By abandoning Russia at so critical a moment they would, if they forced her to yield, render the greatest possible service to Europe. But then they would by the same act destroy the ground of their claim upon Saxony. It is easy

to imagine the malicious pleasure with which Metternich would have thanked Prussia for saving Europe from two embarrassments at once, that of being forced to acquiesce in the establishment of a new state, at once Russian and Parliamentary, upon their frontier, and that of acquiescing in the painful precedent of the deposition of a legitimate German prince. Prussia would have gone away indemnified in Poland, and not in Saxony or on the Rhine; in other words, she would have been restored to a state of weakness like that she had known before 1806, like that Austria was now to know; she would have ceased in a great measure to be German. Suppose on the other hand that Russia should resist the dictation of Europe. In this case the dispute would be settled either peaceably or by war, but one result was certain, namely, that Prussia would earn the bitter enmity of Russia. And yet if she lost the friendship of Russia what other Power would help her in her schemes? Would Austria, her old rival now more jealous than ever? Or England, then partly Austrian, partly Hannoverian in her sympathies? Or France, her bitterest and now her vanquished enemy? Prussia would be exposed without a shield to the hostile conspiracy of Austria and the Small States.

During this first phase Stein does not appear to have been very active. He agrees, as we have seen, with the Prussian Ministers in disapproving the Czar's plan, and he seems to have stopped there. Alexander was not now by any means the same fickle person he had been before his trials began. The terrible year 1812, his study of Napo-

leon's character, the influence of Stein, and his great successes had given him self-reliance and persistency. He persevered in his Polish plan in spite of the opposition, not only of Europe, but, as it appears, of all his own advisers. Stein's suggestion, characteristic enough, that Poland[1] should receive local institutions instead of a Parliament, in other words, should begin its developement in the same way as Prussia had done under his guidance, was disregarded, and there is no evidence that Stein, any more than Hardenberg, saw the extreme danger for Prussia of a breach with Alexander, whose friendship up to a certain point might be counted on, and a coalition with her rival Austria and her enemy France. He seems, in fact, to have approved of the course taken by the Prussian Ministers; at least this seems to be the sense of a remark which he made in a letter to Hardenberg, dated October 26th:

> Prussia must abide firmly by the principles of the maintenance of the European balance, that is her true interest; she has saved herself by returning to that principle, as she ruined herself by deserting it, and she has been favoured in her restoration only with the object of supplying her with sufficient power to maintain the European system.

In other words, Prussia claims Saxony on the ground that she must be made stronger in order that she may protect Central Europe from encroachment; she will stultify herself if she purchases this acquisition by allowing a Russian encroachment

[1] That Stein had considered Polish affairs attentively appears from his Memoir written at Nassau in June, 1807. See above, Vol. I. p. 315.

upon Central Europe. The argument is logical enough, and shows plainly how much injustice is done to Stein when he is accused of sacrificing German interests to Russian. But did Stein suppose that he could induce Europe to give Saxony to Prussia, and at the same time to restore to her a great part of her Polish possessions, by the naked abstract cogency of the argument that she required all this increase of power in order to perform her function of guardian of Germany? Both with Austria and France that argument had not merely no cogency, but a negative cogency; it was a reason why Prussia should *not* be so aggrandised. Moreover Stein is scarcely correct in his statement that Prussia had been saved by returning to the principle of the Balance of Power. She had rather been saved, as we noted in considering the circumstances of the conclusion of the Treaty of Kalisch, by clinging to the Russian alliance with a certain recklessness, and of such recklessness Stein had set the most conspicuous example.

In the same letter to Hardenberg Stein made an important contribution to the discussion. Lord Castlereagh had hitherto taken upon himself the chief burden of the controversy, and he now urged that Austria and Prussia should agree upon the *minimum* which would satisfy them, and then if Alexander refused to accept their proposal refer the matter to the decision of the Congress, apparently conceiving the Congress as a sort of law-court, or sovereign Assembly, which decided by vote with irresistible power. To this suggestion Stein replies simply and conclusively:

It would be of no effect to refer the matter to the Congress, since the Emperor would certainly not submit to the decision of the Congress, and the intervention of France would lead to new complications, while that of the other Powers would have no influence whatever.

It seems likely that the Prussian politicians were blinded as to their true position by what was passing about the same time in Saxony. Stein had proposed to Alexander on September 29th that the administration of Saxony should pass out of the Russian hands of Prince Repnin into those of Prussian officials. Alexander consented, and at a conference between Stein, Nesselrode, Hardenberg and Humboldt, the Russian consent was formally given on condition that Saxony should remain undivided, that its former Constitution should continue in force provisionally, and that it should afterwards enjoy all the privileges, rights and advantages which the German Constitution might confer upon the Prussian territories. Metternich gave his consent to the change, though not without a declaration of his master's dislike to it, and Lord Castlereagh signified the approval of England on the condition that Russia should derive no advantage from it in respect to Poland. Stein then proposed that the King's brother, Prince Wilhelm, should be sent to Dresden as Governor of the new Prussian province, but to this the King refused his permission. Stein, who had nominated Prince Repnin, had now the task of notifying to him the termination of his functions. This he did on October 21st. The reason he gives for the change is, 'That the minds of the inhabitants may be set at rest with respect

to their future destiny, and that restraint may be put upon agitations and agitators, intriguers and intrigues.' He writes in the name of the Czar, but refers especially to the consent given by Austria and England. On November 8th Prince Repnin announced to the Saxons the receipt of this communication from Stein and handed over the administration of the country to Prussia. As throughout these proceedings no attempt was made to disguise the object Prussia had in view, as no opposition was raised in the name of any Power, we can understand how the Prussian Ministers may have supposed that their claim to Saxony was admitted on all hands, and that, whatever course they might take in the Polish affair, there was no risk of its being called in question again. Nevertheless the furious outbreak of German feeling which we shall soon have occasion to record shows how ill-grounded their confidence was.

The knot was at last cut by the intervention of the King. Frederick William and Alexander had an interview on November 6th, which resulted in Hardenberg being summoned and receiving the King's commands to withdraw his opposition to the Russian policy. It has always been understood that Alexander gained this point by a pathetic appeal to the King's feelings, by reminding him of their old friendship, of the services he had done to the King, by speaking of the painfulness of being thwarted in a favourite scheme by his dearest friend. An attempt has lately been made to discredit this, and to represent Frederick William as simply actuated by sound policy, as seeing further

than all his Ministers, and as descending like a *deus ex machina* to cut the dangerous entanglement they had woven[1]. It is true that Talleyrand is the principal authority for the story, and that his veracity and general character are not beyond question. Bernhardi however attests that he had heard precisely the same account in the circle of Hardenberg. We might resist this evidence if the story were intrinsically improbable, but surely it is the very contrary. Whether the King's act was right and justifiable is another question. I confess I think it was; but was it spontaneous? We may even think it possible that the King saw further than his Ministers, and yet doubt whether, even if it were so, he would have had energy enough to act upon a mere personal conviction. For if those are right who give him credit for clear penetration, then we cannot help imputing to him an extreme and morbid self-distrust. We have often found him acting rightly, but scarcely ever without an impulse from without. The appeal supposed to have been made by Alexander, even if it rested on no evidence, would commend itself as a good hypothesis. We may say that in the circumstances Alexander certainly would make such an appeal; we may say also, that if it were made by Alexander Frederick William with his old habit of deference to Alexander would yield to it. And that he suspected the course he was asked to take to be really the right one would make it all the more probable that he would

[1] 'Preussen auf dem Wiener Congresse': article by H. v. Treitschke in the Preussische Jahrbücher, Vol. XXXVII.

take it when asked, though scarcely more probable that he would take it spontaneously.

This renewal of the old understanding between the two Northern Powers was the commencement of a new struggle much more important and interesting as well as more intense. Meanwhile the discussion of the German Constitution had also passed through its first phase. The German Committee met thirteen times between October 14th and November 16th, after which the alarm caused by the Saxon quarrel caused it to suspend its action. The result of so much discussion was indeed not to remove difficulties, but on the contrary to bring difficulties to light and to exhibit the impossibility of creating a satisfactory German Federation. It brought clearly to light three distinct parties—the Prussian, the Austrian, and that of the Smaller States, and showed the last of these to be openly opposed to Federation, as necessarily limiting their own sovereignty; and the second, Austria, to be, as Metternich had avowed from the beginning, disposed to reduce the Federal Union to a *minimum*, that is, to a system of alliances among the German Powers such as might afford some tolerable safeguard against the designs of France. Prussia alone was seriously in favour of Federation, and therefore it was evident from the beginning of the discussion that little better than a nominal Federation would be called into existence. Especially was this certain, because Prussia herself could not dream of abandoning in favour of any Federation her own independent sovereignty and greatness. And in favour of a merely nominal Federation there worked in

Germany all the force of Conservative feeling, for just such a nominal Federation had the old Empire been since the Treaty of Westphalia. The hopeless difficulty of the undertaking did not escape the notice of the politicians engaged in it. Thus writes Münster to Stein, October 19th:

I should have been glad to leave to others the affairs of the Congress of Vienna, because I foresee that what is possible will be criticised as inadequate and that no notice will be taken of the difficulties overcome. Are we to empty out the child with the bath, and do nothing at all, because Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, and Würtemberg will not go so far as your Excellency wishes? I cannot think so. I shall be glad to see even the beginning of a representative system placed on a legal foundation. German history will not end with the Congress of Vienna. Leave it to the future to develope what we begin. Our nation is still too little accustomed to parliamentary discussion, and has too little insight into affairs of politics and government. The love of notoriety will call out demagogues, and instead of freedom we shall produce strife and difficulties if we go too far.

Stein's answer, October 20th, has the following passage:

I frankly confess to your Excellency that I have no confidence in the Quinqueviri (that is the German Committee), none in the shallow and frivolous Metternich, none in the Chancellor, who likes patching better than thorough remedies and without acknowledging it to himself is a despotic bureaucrat, none in the other two for evident reasons. Your Excellency does not know Germany owing to your long absence from it; hence it was that in 1812, 1813 you had so little confidence in the energy of the Germans, and hence it is now that you believe in demagogues and democrats.

As a basis for the deliberations of the Committee Twelve Articles had been drawn up which had been agreed upon between Metternich and Hardenberg,

after Metternich had considered a plan of Constitution in 41 Articles which had been sketched in the summer by Hardenberg with Stein's assistance. The original scheme is before us. Its curious complexity is to be explained partly by the intrinsic difficulty of the problem, partly by the influence of the confused traditions of the old Empire. It designs a German Confederation from which the bulk of the Austrian and Prussian territories is to be excluded, so that in fact Austria and Prussia would have little more connexion with it than England had through Hannover with the old Empire. Austria only enters the Confederation for Salzburg, Tirol, Berchtesgaden, Vorarlberg, and what territory she may retain on the Upper Rhine; Prussia only for her territories west of the Elbe. Six fundamental liberties are to be guaranteed to all members of this Federation: (1) freedom of movement from one Federal State to another; (2) security from remaining under arrest beyond a certain time without trial; (3) security of property (copyright included); (4) right of appeal to regular law-courts, and in special cases to the Federation; (5) freedom of the Press under conditions to be determined; (6) right of entrance into all German academical institutions. Circles like those of the old Empire were to be created, each having its own governor, who was to be the most considerable prince who possessed territory within the Circle; and at Frankfurt, the federal city, the Parliament or Diet was to meet, which, as in the Empire, was to consist of three Chambers. The first Chamber was to be the Directory, consisting of the Emperor of Austria and the King of

Prussia, the former presiding, the latter directing; the second Chamber was to consist of governors of Circles, Austria and Prussia having therefore votes here also; the third was to be the Chamber of Princes and Estates. I may spare the reader more details, the rather as the scheme was effectually transformed when it came into the hands of Metternich. The most important features of it are the exclusion of the principal territories both of Prussia and Austria, and the equal union of Prussia and Austria in the direction. The reason given by Hardenberg for the former provision was that the parts of those great Monarchies which entered the Federation would, if they were small, 'more readily submit to the federal laws, and so the tie become firmer.' He added that 'Austria and Prussia as Great Powers must at the same time conclude an indissoluble alliance with the Federation and guarantee its Constitution.' The fundamental difficulty is here touched on. Austria and Prussia could not part with their sovereignty, and yet if they did not no other member of the Confederation could be called upon to do so, and the Confederation became at once purely nominal. The solution is found by Hardenberg in putting Austria and Prussia mainly outside the Confederation, so that they should part with their unrestricted sovereignty only in a small part of their dominions, and at the same time compensating them for this concession by giving them the control of the affairs of the Confederation. The expedient seems a desperate one, and yet the adoption of it shows a serious wish to grapple with the difficulties of the problem. That Metternich had no such wish he

showed at once by rejecting it. He would have Austria and Prussia enter the Confederation with all their German territories. At the same time he put aside the separate Directorial Chamber, and gave Austria the Direction, which however was to be purely formal, in both the remaining Chambers.

Thus Austria showed at the outset that she wanted only a nominal and not a real Confederation. At the same time no one will recognize Stein's customary clearness of conception in the scheme to which he gave his sanction. The fact is that the chaos of the old Empire had in a manner crazed the best German intellects on the subject of Federation. Thus we observe that that incredible suggestion, which is Stein's own, that Austria should *preside* and Prussia *direct*, was borrowed from the relation of the Roman Emperor to Kurmainz, who had been the working head of the old Empire, and it was forgotten that the new system was intended to be efficient, while the old one had led to a dead lock.

It was just at this moment that the number of Kings in Germany was further increased. As there were so many Kings by the grace of Napoleon, there was now, as times had changed, to be a King by the grace of England. Count Münster claimed on October 12th, by a Circular to the Allied Powers, the title of King of Hannover for George III., and naturally the claim met with no opposition. 'A great title for a small and poor country!' was Stein's remark.

The Twelve Articles were brought forward in the name of Austria and Prussia, at the second meeting of the Committee on October 16th. Even

after Metternich's modifications there remained a touch of definiteness about some of them. Article X. deprived the members of the right of making war with each other. Article XI. declared a *minimum* of Rights of Estates necessary in every Federal State; and Article XII. declared that certain rights, not so many as those enumerated in the Stein-Hardenberg plan, must be enjoyed by all Germans alike. Accordingly the third party now entered the lists. On October 20th, at the third meeting of the Committee, Bavaria and Würtemberg declared against all restrictions of sovereignty. In the name of the King of Bavaria it was declared that his rights were indefeasible and that he would not renounce the exercise of any one of them. Würtemberg protested against the mention of any rights of subjects. This party was not afraid to hint that the Small States still considered France to be their natural ally; and on the other hand there showed itself on the side of Austria an inclination to place itself by the side of France at the head of the sometime Rhenish Confederation. Gentz explained to the Crown Prince of Würtemberg that as Russia would always guide the policy of Prussia and North Germany, a union of the South with Austria and France was necessary to preserve the balance.

Meanwhile the new English-German Monarchy took up a position of its own. Count Münster delivered at the sitting of October 22nd a written statement of the opinion of the Prince Regent with respect to the rights of subjects, in which he made Hannover the representative of the English principle of individual liberty.

'His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Great Britain and Hannover cannot admit the principle that even after the alterations which have taken place in Germany the Princes have acquired unreserved or purely despotic rights over their subjects.' This is argued on the ground, first, that the fall of the imperial constitution of Germany does not carry with it that of the territorial constitution of the German States, in most of which a representative system and in all certain individual rights had always been recognized; secondly, that the treaties concluded between the German Princes and Bonaparte could not legally alienate any rights of their subjects; thirdly, that this was not done by the treaties since concluded with the Allies which guaranteed the sovereign rights of the Princes joining the Coalition, since sovereign rights are not synonymous with despotism. This last doctrine is then supported by an argument which marks the position which Hannover designed to assume in Germany. 'The King of Great Britain is undeniably as sovereign as any other Prince in Europe, and the liberties of his people sustain instead of undermining his throne.'

In this condition of parties Stein, as usual, had recourse to the Emperor Alexander. He stated the case (Nov. 4th) as follows:

The unhappy occurrences which led to the fall of the German Empire in 1806 are well known; they placed Germany in Napoleon's power and founded a practical despotism which still continues in full violence, though it is opposed even to the provision of the Act of the Confederation of the Rhine. That guaranteed to the Princes an overlordship which was limited

by the rights of the Protector and those conceded to the mediatised, and it did not abolish any of the local institutions, such as Estates, &c., which ensured the liberty and property of the inhabitants. But the Princes were zealous in their obedience to the Protector and hastened to throw down the barriers which he had set or left in the way of their glory, and so has grown up the enormous compound of rights, abuses and usurpations which their Cabinets call sovereignty.

He then refers to the Proclamation of Kalisch, to the Treaties of Adhesion, to those of Chaumont and Paris, in which it had been agreed that Germany should form a Federal State; narrates the forming of the German Committee, the proposals made in the Twelve Articles, and the system since adopted by Bavaria and Würtemberg, 'a system of ambition with respect to the Princes and Free Towns, of isolation with respect to the Federation, and of despotism towards their own subjects.' He declares it to be

important to Europe that there should not exist a crowd of small Courts, whose restless, quarrelsome, and necessarily faithless policy creates an entanglement of intrigues and tricks which must influence more or less the greater courts; it accords with the just and liberal (a word Alexander liked to hear) principles of the Allied Powers that Germany should enjoy political and civil freedom, that limits should be set to the sovereignty of the Princes, that the crying abuses of power should cease, that an ancient noblesse distinguished by its military achievements, its influence in council, its eminent position in the church, should not be abandoned to the caprices of despots who are accompanied by jacobinical and envious agents; lastly, that the rights of all should be confirmed and protected, and Germany cease to be a vast abode of oppressors and oppressed.

This passage shows how the excitement of the War of Liberation, during which Stein had often

been called a Jacobin, had not really changed his way of thinking. In his mind now as ever a Jacobin means a friend of tyranny, exceptionally unscrupulous and sordid.

He concludes that the Allied Sovereigns must speak their mind, and he recommends a confidential note.

The Emperor listened favourably to his representation, but Nesselrode, who had fallen under Metternich's influence, opposed it, being assured by his Austrian friends that German affairs were going on very well. Alexander required Stein to modify his first draught of the note, which he pronounced too long and too bitter; Stein complied, and the amended copy was signed by Nesselrode and delivered to Metternich and Hardenberg on November 11th. It had the effect of encouraging Humboldt, Münster, and even Metternich to declare strongly against Bavaria and Würtemberg at the sitting of the German Committee, which took place on the next day. Party feeling began to run high; it was at once heightened and directed personally towards Stein by a fierce article which appeared at the end of October in the Rhine Mercury. Even the Crown Prince of Bavaria, whom we have lately seen in friendly intercourse with Stein, appears now bitterly offended with him. At a dinner-table Stein heard him roaring, as he had roared a few months before in the garden of Frankfurt: 'Yes, there is a deal of mad nonsense written now; by that fellow Görres and others whom Stein protects.' Stein had to run up and beg his Royal Highness not to forget himself and tell him it was not proper to speak people's

names so loudly in a great company. Another time at Count Stackelberg's a German Prince quoted with exultation to Stein's face an article against him, in which he was spoken of as one who had *once* been powerful. According to Varnhagen Stein shook his fist in his assailant's face, saying, 'Cette insolence d'un gazettier je la méprise; mais gare à qui osera la répéter.'

But these discussions were only important so far as they gave distinctness to the different tendencies. Nothing was accomplished at this time. On November 16th the representative of Würtemberg delivered a note, in which his master declined to take any further part in the deliberations, adding that he would renounce no right except for an equivalent. An answer was made to this note in the name of Austria and Prussia, in which it was firmly asserted that it did not lie in the option of the Princes to enter the Federation or not. Würtemberg rejoined on November 24th. But at this point the German controversy was for the present suspended. The German Committee met no more, and all minds began to be absorbed in watching the progress of the Saxon question, which seemed likely before long to lead to a new European war.

CHAPTER II.

THE SAXON QUESTION.

THE restoration of the understanding between Prussia and Russia, which was the consequence of the personal interview of November 6th, led to a complete change in the aspect of the Congress, and opened a new controversy far more bitter, and affecting Germany far more nearly than that which it closed. The ascendancy of Russia was no doubt to be dreaded by Germany, but the danger was not very imminent, nor again was it new. The notion of a Parliament at Warsaw created alarm, but a somewhat indefinite alarm, and the consoling thought occurred at times that the bad effects of it would fall chiefly upon Russia herself. Anyhow, after Russia had recovered the support of Prussia, it seemed useless to continue the controversy, and necessary to submit to what was unavoidable. Up to this time, as we have seen, the claim of Prussia to Saxony had been generally allowed, so much so that the administration of the country had been suffered to pass into Prussian hands. But this

was only because the encroachments of Russia diverted attention, or possibly, in the case of Austria at least, it was a stratagem, and the object of it was simply to put discord between Prussia and Russia, and so overcome each in succession. As soon as this design was frustrated, and the opposition to Russia disarmed, the Saxon question began to wear a different aspect, and it was soon evident how much more important than the Polish question it really appeared to the German politicians, and how much stronger were the feelings it excited among them. And the more it divided German politicians, the more it gave Talleyrand the opportunity for which he had been watching. It enabled him to dissolve again the momentary union which Napoleon's tyranny had created among the German States; it enabled him for a moment to revive the Rhenish Confederation for the benefit of the Bourbons, and to make France the soul of a new combination almost more formidable than that which had supported Napoleon himself.

The change of front was quickly executed. The opposition to Russia became in a moment an opposition to Prussia, and the more naturally through the offence which Prussia had given by passing over to Russia's side. The word was passed that Prussia was a traitor to the cause of Europe, and this plausible phrase disguised the ancient jealousy of Austria, the mingled fear and spite of the Princes of the Rhenish Confederation, who felt themselves condemned and punished in the forfeiture of the King of Saxony, and the revenge and ambition of France. The contest which began was not like that which

had just ended, a mere international dispute. It was a violent political controversy, stirring the German mind deeply, and waged not merely in diplomatic notes but in newspaper articles and pamphlets. Seldom indeed did Germany in that time of her political nonage witness such an eager political debate. The controversy spread into other countries, where its merits were very imperfectly understood, and our own Parliament contributed to it many violent speeches. There are in fact few more instructive incidents in the earlier history of Liberalism proper, that is, Continental Liberalism, than this controversy.

A kind of confusion had been produced in the public mind by the Restoration which had just taken place in France. That Restoration, whether in itself wise or unwise, necessary or unnecessary, had had the effect of putting the occurrences which had preceded it in a false light. Napoleon had not really been overthrown by Europe as a revolutionary or illegitimate sovereign. He had been most properly deposed for aggression and conquest and as an incorrigible disturber of the general peace, but his title was so little disputed that those who took up arms against him only arrived very gradually, and after he had rejected the most liberal propositions of peace, at the design of dethroning him. Had he represented the oldest dynasty in Europe, the reasons for compelling him to abdicate would have been just as valid. But when he had fallen, the fact that he had no hereditary title became important. The throne did not, as it might otherwise have done, descend to his son as a matter of

course, and it was ultimately decided to recall the representative of the older line. Louis XVIII. was then chosen, on a vacancy of the throne, as the best of several candidates; he was not restored as the only legitimate claimant. Had it been possible to expel Napoleon and maintain his dynasty, the true nature of what had happened would have been more easily perceived, and many misconceptions avoided. As it was, an irresistible impression was diffused, that the new Monarchy, which had sprung out of the French Revolution, was a kind of detected imposture, which had been proved to have no solid foundation, when the truth was that it was only too real and solid and had fallen only through its prodigious excess of vigour. And for this false interpretation of Napoleon's fall it was plainly the interest of the reinstated Bourbons to procure currency and credit.

In the winter of 1814 there was naturally in all minds an absorbing conviction that a system, of which Napoleon was the representative, had failed. They were sure that the lawless violence of the last ten years, the arbitrary overthrow and creation of states, the perpetual rearrangement of frontiers, the capricious assignment of passive populations now to this sovereign, now to that; they were sure that all this constituted a bad system, of which the world was tired. The bad system was that of Napoleon; then what was the good one? As a matter of course the good one seemed that which had taken its place, that of the Restoration, the system now called by the name invented by Talleyrand, Legitimism. And yet it was only by a sort of accident

that Legitimism had come to be considered as the opposite of Napoleonism. The legitimate dynasty had been scarcely less guilty of the crime for which Napoleon was deposed than Napoleon himself. Louis XIV.'s aggressions had been similar to his and had provoked a similar though a less severe punishment.

The question of Prussia's claim to Saxony presented itself at the very moment when everything that even looked like Napoleonism was in extreme discredit, and the mere shadow of Legitimism was regarded with respect. The rough-and-ready verdict naturally was, A country to be annexed! that is Napoleonic. A King to be deposed! that is contrary to Legitimism. Public opinion has changed again many times since that moment of exaggerated reaction. Many annexations have taken place since, and some have been regarded with satisfaction; many sovereigns have been deposed, and some in the common opinion deservedly.

Napoleon has had his vindicators, who have represented the changes he made as beneficial to the world. If they have not gained their cause, at least they have shown that a beneficent Napoleon is conceivable, and that in certain circumstances great redistributions of territory, even if accomplished by violence, may be useful. Was the proposed annexation of Saxony a change of this kind? If so, we shall not now condemn it simply because it was Napoleonic.

We have seen by what arguments Stein supported Prussia's claim. It had been proved by experience in 1795 that Prussia was not strong or

rich enough to protect Germany, and it was proved by later occurrences that France was disposed to take advantage of her defenceless condition. It followed, and all the more because there was so little prospect of organising an efficient Federation, that Prussia must receive an accession of territory. It is true that this plea was Napoleonic in so far as it was a plausible argument for annexing territory. But the objection to Napoleon's pleas had been not that they were plausible, but that they were *merely* plausible, that they would not bear examination. Did Prussia's plea resemble them in this? Sound arguments always resemble plausible sophistries, for the simple reason that plausible sophistries are imitations of sound arguments. It was at least a presumption in favour of this plea that it was urged by a man like Stein, who was devoted to the cause of Germany and not to that of Prussia.

But it was alleged that even granting that Germany and Europe in general might be gainers by the strengthening of Prussia, the annexation was morally indefensible. And it was the misfortune of Prussia that this was urged by Conservatives and Liberals alike, by the one party in the name of the rights of Kings, by the other in the name of the rights of nations. To the Conservatives (I antedate for convenience the party name) the title of the King of Saxony was like that by which a man holds his estate; to deprive him of his kingdom was an act of simple robbery, even though it should be necessary for the safety of all Germans and the peace of all Europe. When it was urged that he had

incurred forfeiture by the greatest crime that a man can well commit, by allying himself with the enemy of the German name to enslave his countrymen, this party would refuse to recognize the existence of a German nationality, and would assert the right of the King of Saxony to make what alliances he pleased. And they were supported in this view by the vogue which Legitimism enjoyed at the moment, and by the discredit which the Restoration in France had brought upon the Revolution as well as upon Napoleon, and in the Revolution, upon that distinction which the Revolution had established between Governments and peoples. Meanwhile Liberals were as much shocked as Conservatives by the proposed annexation. It reminded them vaguely of the Partition of Poland. Prince Repnin, the amiable Russian nominated by Stein, was in their eyes as the Orloffs and Potemkins of Catharine, and they pictured the Saxons as a 'nation,' which was to be assigned away without regard to its own wish, as though it were a herd of cattle.

Stein, the advocate of this annexation, assuredly felt as strongly as any man of that age upon the rights of nations. He had had special occasion to notice the weakness of a state which is not also a nation. But he would not have acknowledged that the Saxons constituted a nation. In his mind the so-called Saxons were simply Germans, and in annexing Saxony to Prussia he thought he contributed in the best way towards the restoration of a nation which for a long time had been mutilated. He would have admitted speculatively that it would

have been better if force could have been dispensed with, but probably he would have alleged that a population long kept, as the Saxons had been, in a state of political nonage could not properly be said to have a rational power of choosing their rulers.

This Pangermanism of Stein is nevertheless not closely similar to the Panslavism of the present day. It was not purely because the Saxons were ethnologically German that he wished to annex them, but also because Germany had once formed a political whole which had been gradually dissolved by adverse circumstances. He bore in mind also that the Saxons and Prussians were united in religion. But it was hard indeed for him to explain his view to foreigners, of whom some did not understand what he meant by a nation, and those who did could not realise to themselves a German nation.

An eager political controversy does not live upon abstract reasonings or casuistical subtleties alone; it requires a mixture of difference of opinion with conflict of interests. The case against Prussia, we have seen, was very plausible; so much so that in England, where men were at least not prevented by interest from judging impartially, the prevailing impression on both sides of politics was that a ruthless crime was meditated. But on the Continent the controversy was sharpened by the great interests and rivalries involved. The old incurable discord which lay at the heart of German affairs was revived in this dispute, the discord which began with Frederick's invasion of Silesia, and which in the age just passed had delivered Germany over as a

prey to Revolutionary France. To Metternich the claim upon Saxony now made by Prussia was what the claim to Silesia had been to Maria Theresa, what the Prussian acquisitions in the Second Partition of Poland had been to Thugut. It excited a bitter jealousy mixed with terror, the more so as the territory in question lay upon the Austrian frontier. Instinctively Austria looked about for help, and a most serviceable ally presented itself. The Rhenish Confederation still existed in reality, though formally dissolved. Ever since Austria had joined the Coalition she had been bidding for its favour. By the Treaties of Ried and Fulda she had laid the foundation of what may be regarded as a new League of Princes directed by Austria against Prussia, as the former League had been armed by Prussia against Austria. The Saxon question was precisely calculated to give life to this new combination, for it was a question on which the Rhenish Confederation felt almost more keenly than Austria herself. In the King of Saxony the Rhenish Confederation itself would be condemned, so that the honour of each member of it seemed concerned to save him, and this natural sensitiveness was heightened by the jealousy with which such Princes as the Kings of Würtemberg and Bavaria regarded their sometime equal, but now superior, the King of Prussia.

But the keen interest which the Rhenish Confederation took in the question roused another Power. That body had been called into existence to serve the purposes of France, and France could not see with indifference Austria monopolising the

advantage to be derived from its support. Napoleon's German policy had not passed away with him. The restored Bourbons had inherited from him a minister who understood it almost as well as himself. It could not possibly escape Talleyrand what an incomparable opportunity now offered for reviving the old divisions of Germany for the advantage of France. Upon this simple observation he founded a most comprehensive plan, and called into existence, as if by the waving of a wand, a new political combination of vast extent. The word Legitimism dropped at the right moment gathered into one great European party the Austrians, the Rhenish Princes, the party of the French Restoration, and the English Tories, and arrayed them, as defenders of the indefeasible right of the King of Saxony, in opposition to the Liberal Alexander, to Stein and to the Prussian leaders of the War of Liberation.

At the same time there began in Germany a paper war which is memorable in the history of German opinion, and forms a sort of commencement of the new German period. Professor Sartorius of Göttingen asked, under the signature of a Prussian Papist, whether the spoliation of Silesia, of West Prussia and of Hannover was to be repeated, and whether Prussia meant to take *Suum cuique rapit* as her motto. In Bavaria Aretin compared Prussia to the frog which puffs itself out to the size of an ox, and maintained that Europe would never find rest in a secure balance until Prussia should give up the pretension of being a Great Power. Collections of spurious letters were published, by which it was intended

to fasten the imputation of revolutionary designs upon the leading Prussian politicians and officers. On the other hand Görres in the Rhine Mercury combated French influence, though without decisively pledging his paper to the Prussian side. Of Stein's friends Arndt and Eichhorn distinguished themselves in the defence of Prussia; J. G. Hofmann, the statistician, pointed out that Prussia had already outlived one such outcry, and had risen in the past year higher than ever from the universal unpopularity into which she had fallen. Niebuhr in his pamphlet entitled *Prussia's Right against the Saxon Court* carried on the work which Fichte had begun at the time of Stein's Ministry, asserted the right of the nation to be higher than that of the states into which a nation may be divided, betrayal of the nation's cause to be a punishable felony, even though no written law be violated, and states which are too small to protect themselves to be no true states.

Among the diplomatists at the Congress the storm was brewing through the latter half of November and the first days of the following month. It may be said to have burst forth openly with the Austrian Declaration of December 10th, and to have acquired new violence with the French Declaration of the 19th. At the end of the year it was at its height. War was openly spoken of as at hand and armies began to move. The Treaty concluded between England, France and Austria on January 3rd, 1815, was indeed secret, and only came to light when Napoleon found it on his return to the Tuileries, and published it in order to sow discord in the Coalition. The only public step taken by the new

party was to demand the admission of France into that Committee of the Great Powers which W. v. Humboldt calls the real Congress, and from which France had been excluded by the express terms of the Treaty of Paris. This demand was allowed on January 4th, and the dispute began almost from this time to slacken in intensity. It had already been settled by a compromise, when the ground itself upon which Talleyrand had built so ambitious a fabric moved away from under it by the return of Napoleon from Elba and the flight of the Bourbons.

Stein was active throughout this phase of the Congress, but did not play any leading part. His opposition to Alexander's plans had been outspoken enough in October to chill their friendship for a time, and something like a reconciliation between Alexander and Stein had to follow the renewal of the Alliance between the two Governments. Prince Czartoryski informed Stein about the middle of November that the Emperor was hurt by his reserve and invited him to make new advances. An interview followed, of which the following account is given as coming from Stein himself. The Emperor was found somewhat unwell, and lying on a sofa:

He received me in a very friendly manner, and began to speak of the general condition of affairs. He said Metternich wanted to introduce a universal confusion, and this seemed also to be the intention of the English, while the Emperor Francis showed confidence and friendly feeling. I remarked in answer, that I did not think the English wanted war, their taxation being so heavy and needing to be lightened. The points now in question seemed rather punctilios than important for Russia or Austria. Krakau was no doubt important to the latter, but

not so much so as to justify a war in existing circumstances. I thought Russia could quite well part with it, and Prussia would certainly come to an arrangement about Thorn. He replied that it would be humiliating to him to evacuate Krakau after having occupied it. I replied that nevertheless, as it was only a sacrifice in order to give peace to the nations, which they sorely needed, and as he stood at the head of 400,000 men, this evacuation could only be regarded as a proof of his magnanimity not as an effect of weakness, and that the present overwrought situation of armed negotiation could not continue. He disagreed with me, and said that concentration was the usual condition of the Russian army, that on account of the vastness of the Empire it was impossible to keep them distributed in cantonments, and that he had therefore proposed, in order to tranquillise foreign Powers, to constitute Poland and withdraw the Russian army into Russia itself, but that this was Hebrew to the Austrians, they could not understand it. He wanted peace and hoped to attain it, and to be able afterwards to devote himself to the diffusion and promotion of liberal ideas which alone made life worth having. He expressed his contentment with the disposition towards him shown by the Emperor Francis. I recommended Germany to him. He promised to do everything in order to bring about a legal state of things here; when I drew his attention to the indolence and caprice of his brother-in-law the Grand-Duke of Baden he bade me send in my opinion about the way of bringing him to reason. He said too, that he wished Hardenberg would soon discharge his commission and bring matters to an end, and agreed with me when I said that it was necessary to bring all the three points at issue, those of Poland, Saxony and Mainz, to a decision at once and in a single negotiation, in order to simplify business, and avoid giving occasion for new complications. He took this opportunity of speaking of Saxony, thought the partition quite useless for the country, for Prussia, and even for Austria, since a Small Prince would not be able to guard the frontier. He closed the interview by assuring me that he would make the maintenance of liberal principles the chief occupation of his life.

The topics of this conversation mark a position of affairs when the dispute still turned rather on the

Russian than the Prussian claims. Krakau, as the stronghold of Poland most threatening to Austria, and Thorn, as that most threatening to Prussia, were principal subjects of discussion. The affair of Baden is explained in a paper which Stein sent in on the 25th, in which he says that that state wants nothing but a good Government, but that the present Duke at once retards government and makes it oppressive by a mixture of indolence and despotism. In proof of his indolence Stein alleges that a heap of more than 15,000 decrees were awaiting his signature, which he was too lazy to give. Stein begs the Emperor, as the Duke's brother-in-law, to interfere, and require the appointment of a Viceroy or First Minister and at the same time the convocation of the Estates.

Russia made on November 27th a new Declaration, which was draughted by Stein, and in which she declared herself ready to make new sacrifices for the sake of peace, on condition that all the points at issue, whether they referred to Poland, Saxony, or the occupation of Mainz, should be combined in the same negotiation and settled in a single treaty. The Emperor consents, seeing that the occupation of Krakau and Thorn appears in the eyes of Austria and Prussia to have given the Russian Empire a position of military advantage against them, that those two towns should be declared neutral, and like the Hanseatic towns should be declared free and independent, with the addition of a certain territory round them. He then declares in favour of the complete annexation of Saxony to Poland, and of placing Mainz in the hands of the German Fede-

ration. On the Saxon question he reasons as follows:

> His Imperial Majesty holds himself bound to secure to Prussia at least the restoration of the condition of 1805, since His Majesty has accepted this obligation in the Treaty of Kalisch, and has found in Prussia an ally who has supported him in this memorable war with a noble energy and constancy; and the Emperor regards the partition of Saxony as opposed to the true interest of that country, to the wishes of its inhabitants and to the assurances which he considered it necessary to give them in order to encourage them to endure the sacrifices imposed by the armament and the war.

We see here the shape which the Saxon question was beginning to assume. It is a question between the entire and the partial annexation of Saxony. As early as November 11th Metternich had declared to Castlereagh that the King of Saxony must receive at least Dresden with 500,000 souls. Count Münster had also begun eagerly to advocate this scheme. His opinion had wavered a good deal since the beginning of the war. We saw him in the last months of 1812 intent upon reducing Prussia to a Power of the second rank, and ambitious of giving Hannover the precedency in North Germany. It does not appear that he would have felt any scruple about annexing conquered territory for this purpose. Then followed the War of Liberation and the astonishing resurrection of Prussia, which modified Münster's tone considerably. We also notice that he is careful throughout to maintain for Hannover a position distinct from that of the Princes of the Rhenish Confederation. When in the summer of 1813 he begged that Stein would use the *suaviter in modo* with the German Princes, he added, by

way of explanation, 'Assuredly I do not mean to spare the Princes who conduct themselves like Saxony. He deserves to be proscribed, not respected (geächtet nicht geachtet).' But now he made, as it were, a last despairing effort to check the progress of Prussia. He snatched at the scheme of a partition in the same spirit with which we are told the Emperor Francis adopted it, that is, as an unsatisfactory settlement which would soon be disturbed again, and out of which it might be possible to build up a Coalition against Prussia.

And thus strangely enough those who raised an outcry against Prussia's plan as lawless substituted a plan which was in some respects more lawless still. Even from the point of view of the rights of sovereigns it is difficult to understand how the annexation of the whole could be sheer robbery and yet the annexation of a part allowable, but if we consider the rights of nations partial annexation was clearly the less justifiable plan of the two. It was, in fact, really partition, and might be compared to the Partition of Poland, whereas the Prussian plan was not so, and it had been expressly stipulated when the administration of Saxony was handed over to the Prussians that no partition of the country should take place.

Stein argued the question of Annexation or Partition, in a paper which he wrote on December 3rd. After asserting the right of conquest, and supporting it by quotations from Grotius and Vatel, he examines the conduct of the King of Saxony since March, 1813, and asks, 'Is there a case in history where more reasons for asserting the right

of conquest in its full rigour concur?' He then urges at the same time the necessity and the obligation incurred by the Allies of restoring Prussia to its former territorial extension, the impossibility of restoring its Polish territory, or the Franconian Principalities, or the territory ceded to Hannover in compliance with England's demand at the Treaty of Reichenbach. He reckons that Prussia loses 2,500,000 souls, and that the annexation of Saxony will only give 1,600,000, so that 900,000 will remain to be furnished from the Duchy of Berg and the Left Bank of the Rhine. The annexation of Saxony, he argues, will strengthen Prussia for the defence of Germany in the best possible way, since it will strengthen her central part.

If Saxony should be restored in her integrity the mistake would be made which Austria committed in preserving Bavaria; a Power would be created in the North of Germany which would be hostile to Prussia, would weaken her and furnish a means of influence to France.

He then discusses the scheme of partition, which he pronounces to afford no advantage, political or military, to Austria, and to involve great inconveniences for Prussia and for Saxony itself.

A small Saxon state ruled by the old royal house would be a focus of intrigues and a rendezvous of the disaffected; its capital, Dresden, would fall into ruin since the Government would not be strong enough to keep it up, and the part of the country that would be united to Prussia would feel itself cramped and hurt by its separation from one of its most substantial parts. The assurance that Saxony should be preserved in its integrity, which His Majesty the Emperor caused to be given to the Saxons as a ground of comfort and encouragement, and which was quite recently repeated in Prince Repnin's speech, would be a deception, and it

concerns the Emperor's greatness to secure the happiness and peace of a people which has given him convincing proofs of its love and admiration.

By this time the Russian question was in the main settled. The concessions about Krakau and Thorn, and Alexander's abandonment of his original scheme of joining Lithuania to the Duchy of Warsaw to make the new kingdom of Poland, appeased the disputants. And just at the same time the Prussian politicians began to perceive with alarm what an opposition was gathering against themselves. On the same day on which Stein penned the above argument Hardenberg wrote a curious pathetic appeal to Metternich, full of a good-hearted simplicity, such as it surprises us to find in the official papers of a veteran diplomatist.

Find a way, dear Prince, of bringing to an end the position of things in which we unfortunately find ourselves. Rescue Prussia from her present condition. She must not issue in a shameful condition of weakness—and that quite alone—from this terrible contest in which she has made such great and noble exertions, and look on while all, all increase their territory, improve their frontiers, acquire security, and that in a great measure through her exertions. Surely it cannot with any shadow of right be expected of her that she alone should make such painful sacrifices purely for the satisfaction of others. Sooner she must resolve to set all to hazard again. Your august Monarch, dear Prince, is straightforwardness, uprightness, justice itself. I appeal to him.

And then he quoted some verses he had seen in the Rhine Mercury, in which Austria and Prussia are exhorted to guide Germany by their united and harmonious influence, and prayed that they might become the motto of the new German Constitution. In a grave state-paper this quotation—particularly

as the verses are of the most ordinary bombast—produces a singular effect.

In Metternich's answer to this appeal, dated December 10th, the new quarrel burst out. It declared that the protection and well-being of Germany depended upon the concord of Austria and Prussia, and that the annexation of Saxony would render such concord impossible, being opposed to the Emperor's principles, to family ties, interests of frontier and relations of neighbourhood, being opposed also to the wishes of the principal German states, and of France. It then proposed that Prussia should seek her indemnities in Poland and on the Rhine, receiving only about a fifth part of Saxony.

For more than a week this startling retractation of Austria's earlier concessions was allowed to work its effect by itself. It threw Prussia at once into the arms of Russia. Stein explained to the Czar all the urgency of the situation, and exhorted him particularly to take the affair out of the hands of Nesselrode, who had fallen under Metternich's influence, and to trust rather to Czartorysky, Rasumoffsky and Capodistrias; he also warned him against Gentz, whom he described as a man of withered brain and corrupted heart. On the 15th Alexander resolved in a conference with Stein, Czartorysky and Capodistrias to deliver a Memoir presenting Prussia's claims to Austria, and to negotiate them personally with the Emperor Francis.

In these negotiations (Stein writes) Nesselrode took no share and was deeply hurt to find that he had lost all influence. He had lost it by his incapacity and blind devotion to Metternich

which caused him often to cross the Emperor's plans or support them but lukewarmly....His mediocrity, ignorance, and narrowness in views and feelings, his want of courage in great crises, never allowed him to support himself at any height for a length of time. He fell inevitably as soon as he tried to be anything but a tool of his master, as soon as he pretended to a sort of independence; he fell since he did not depend on himself even for this, but allowed himself to be swayed by the influence of a foreign minister hated by the Emperor. As to Metternich (Stein continues), he has intelligence, adroitness, amiability, but wants depth, information, diligence, sincerity. He likes complications because they occupy him, and wants force, depth, and earnestness to conduct business in the great and simple style. Often too by his frivolity, dislike of work, and untruthfulness he produces complications without intending it. He is cold and therefore indisposed to address the nobler feelings of human nature.

Austria by this new step only pursued the course upon which she had entered when first she joined the Coalition. But at that time she had stood alone against Russia and Prussia. It was not so now, and discord having broken out again Talleyrand was not slow to see his opportunity. The French Declaration is dated December 19th:

France (it says) desires nothing for herself; her only wish is to complete the Restoration in Europe as it has been completed in France and to close the Revolution. The nations must not be arbitrarily distributed; only those territories which are without a master are subject to distribution. The object of France is to restore the reign of legitimate right. In itself the Polish question is the most important of all that are before the Congress, but the King is compelled to sacrifice his personal wishes on this subject. This being so the question of Saxony becomes the more important, in respect to which kingdom proposals have been made which violate most seriously the principles of legitimism and of the balance of power.

Before admitting these principles it would be necessary to allow that kings may be brought to trial, that they may be tried by

those who wish to get possession of their territory, that they may be condemned without being heard and without being able to defend themselves, that their families and peoples may be involved in their condemnation, that confiscation which all civilised nations have banished from their codes is to be consecrated in the nineteenth century by the public law of Europe, the confiscation of a whole kingdom being no doubt less invidious than that of a simple cottage, and that nations have no independent rights distinct from those of their subjects, but may be compared to the stock of a farm.

Talleyrand goes on to argue that the annexation of Saxony would overturn the balance of power, not only by giving Prussia a point of vantage against Austria, but also by giving to a single member of the Germanic Body a power of attack entirely out of proportion to the power of resistance of the other States.

He concludes that

It is contrary to reason and right to propose the question what part of his territory should be restored by Prussia to the King of Saxony, that the question should rather be how much the King of Saxony should cede, and that the Austrian Declaration appears to have made a fair proposal.

In a letter to Lord Castlereagh Talleyrand unfolded his doctrine of legitimism more fully and in a way to commend it to an English Tory:

The Revolution was a struggle between opposite principles. To close the Revolution is to put an end to this struggle, which can only be done through the complete triumph of the principle for the defence of which Europe has taken arms. At the beginning the struggle was between monarchical principles and those called republican. When the invincible nature of things had given victory to the former the strife began between the revolutionary and the legitimate dynasties. The latter have won but not yet completely. The revolutionary dynasties have disappeared

except one (he means that of Murat and finds it convenient to forget that of Bernadotte). The legitimate dynasties are restored, but one is threatened. Thus the Revolution is not closed. In what way must it be closed? By the unqualified triumph of the principle of legitimism. By the preservation of the King of Saxony and his kingdom, and by the restoration of the kingdom of Naples to its rightful sovereign.

The passage is an interesting specimen of the art of misrepresentation. Europe is asserted to have taken arms to vindicate the principle of Legitimism, because the accidental and very unexpected result of the campaign had been to restore the old dynasty in France. The Powers had taken arms for various purposes, which there is no difficulty in stating, but certainly not for this purpose. Russia took arms first to resist and then to revenge an invasion; Prussia joined her to escape from an insupportable tyranny; Austria after an unsuccessful mediation, reluctantly took up arms because Napoleon persisted in maintaining all his conquests; and not one of these Powers had a thought of questioning his title. Yet upon this transparent falsehood the whole argument is built.

Stein wrote an answer to the French Declaration in which he asserted, what was evidently the true moral of the dethronement of Napoleon, that a sovereign who violates the rights of other nations, may be resisted by them, and that they have a right, if necessary, for the sake of their own security, to dethrone him, and he applies this to the case of the King of Saxony. He remarks that it was 'expressly to prevent the portioning out of populations like cattle that the advocates of the annexation opposed

the partition of Saxony as mischievous to the country and useless to the great interests of Europe.' 'From the European point of view,' he remarks, 'the question is simply between giving the King of Saxony a portion of his old dominions or indemnifying him elsewhere, for example on the Left Bank of the Rhine, and such a question is too insignificant to detain the Powers,'

For a time, however, Talleyrand carried Castlereagh with him. Though it would certainly not be true to say that England had taken up arms for Legitimism, it was less untrue of her than of any other Power. Pitt had persisted in declaring that he desired the restoration of the Bourbons, though he expressly disclaimed the intention of interfering in the internal affairs of France. But Burke had preached Legitimism, and since Pitt's death the ruling party in England had become much more decidedly Tory than Pitt had ever been. Stein and Hardenberg with Humboldt and Czartorysky had a conference with Castlereagh on the 20th, at which Castlereagh avowed his adhesion to the Austrian view, alleging the force of public opinion, which he found to be opposed in Europe to the annexation of Saxony, a consideration which he held to be more important than the intrinsic merits of the question.

And thus the year ended with threats of rupture and war. 'A petty and perverse ambition,' writes Stein, 'a trivial disposition that takes pleasure in weaving intrigues, petty local grudges, impede the great affairs, leave us in a disquieting condition and bring us to the brink of the abyss.'

Of those personal friends to whom we look for information about Stein's private life none except Gagern was at Vienna. Gagern gives us no characteristic traits, remarking only that Stein took the most lively and evident share in deciding the lot of Prussia and in the proceedings of the Congress, and that it would be scarcely possible to conceive three men more unlike each other than the three distinguished Prussians of the Congress, Stein, Hardenberg, and Humboldt. 'If I were to attempt to characterise them exactly,' he adds, 'I should assign solid power to Stein, social tact to Hardenberg, varied and ready skill to Humboldt.'

There are traces here, as in almost every part of Stein's life when he was busy, of outbursts of irritability. What is precisely referred to in the following we cannot now learn, but it is evidently something of the kind. It was written on the last day of the year by v. Gersdorff, representative of the Saxon Duchies. It contains New Year's wishes which are sent in writing because v. Gersdorff 'has been for some time aware that his presence is burdensome to your Excellency.' The wish, which is conveyed in the language of profound admiration, is that 'Heaven may grant Stein the power to believe in the existence of persons who appreciate and understand him, even when they do not tell him so, who love and honour him without preferring any claims, but are obliged to muster all their respect and love in order to withstand the piercing shafts of his disparagement, and would gladly see him expend upon the enemies of the good cause the vigour which enables him to give pain to his best and most faithful friends.'

The prospect which 1815 opened was indeed most alarming, and Talleyrand might well for the moment boast of his diplomatic triumph. But his brilliant combination endured only a moment, and created a danger which dispersed as quickly as it had gathered. It seemed to put the Bourbons in a position more commanding than even Napoleon had held. They were to lean like him upon the Rhenish Confederation, but they were also to have England on their side, with the Netherlands and Hannover, and were to reap the full benefit of Austria's grudge against Prussia. Could such a combination endure, Talleyrand might confidently hope to restore France before long to her Rhine frontier. But the prospect was much too wonderful to be substantial. It might be possible for a moment to mislead the Powers into admitting his views, but they would be certain to recoil speedily from the consequences of them. Neither Austria nor England had any wish to give back to France the ascendancy of which they had just helped to deprive her; England had indeed scarcely any interest in the Saxon question, and Castlereagh's Hannoverian leaning was one which could not be confessed to the House of Commons, while Austria did not take up the championship of the Rhenish Confederation in order to see France carry off the equivalent. But indeed the whole scheme of Talleyrand belonged to a system of politics which Europe was in the act of abandoning. It was in the spirit of the reckless age which had just come to an end. It was like the last flash from a thunder-cloud which has passed by, and is disappearing on the horizon. There had been war in Europe

with scarcely any intermission for twenty years, and the last two years had been the most bloody and destructive of the whole authentic history of war. During this period politicians had, as it were, grown accustomed to a state of war; they contemplated it with indifference, and readily adopted combinations likely to lead to it. And thus as soon as Napoleon was out of the way, his conquerors are seen planning war among themselves on a gigantic scale. But public feeling had, they soon found, changed its tone; war had passed out of fashion with the fall of Napoleon, just as the 'Thermidoriens' found that the Terror could not be continued after the fall of Robespierre. The Saxon question was in itself not worth a European war, particularly as there was room for several middle courses between the total annexation demanded by Prussia, and the small cession allowed by Metternich, and if it was in itself somewhat insignificant, to allow it to stand between Europe and the repose which she needed at that moment as she had never needed repose before, would have been an act of insanity. In November Stein had pointed out to the Czar the absolute necessity of peace; it was necessary, he said, 'not merely for the restoration of the general prosperity, but also for the restoration of morality, which had suffered terribly from the long-continued pressure of a state of war.' We may be sure that Lord Castlereagh, however warlike his language might be at times, knew that he could not bring back to the English House of Commons a new war, and the letters he received from Lord Liverpool showed that peace was so much taken for granted that the public had ceased to occupy their

minds with the subject, and were already absorbed in preparing for the grand Parliamentary campaigns which peace must bring with it. Castlereagh must come home, he writes. 'Last year we could spare you; everything was quiet in Parliament, everybody waiting for the result, and no symptom of party spirit appeared. Now very few persons give themselves any anxiety about what is passing at Vienna except in as far as it is connected with expense; and I have never seen more party animosity than was manifested in November, and, I understand, still appears at the Clubs and in private societies' (Jan. 16th). And again, 'The question of Saxony will, I trust, be settled before it is necessary for you to depart. . . . I do not wish to see the system of totally annihilating ancient states extended beyond what is absolutely necessary' (Jan. 12th). From these hints Castlereagh would naturally arrive at a policy of compromise, of which the object would be to settle the dispute speedily and, in any case, without a war, but if possible to rescue the King of Saxony from absolute destruction.

Accordingly the new Allies, England, Austria and France, after signing their Secret Treaty on January 3rd, and urging on January 4th the admission of Talleyrand to the Conference of the Great Powers, advanced no further. Castlereagh openly declared against allowing the King of Saxony to have a voice in the sentence to be passed upon himself; and upon his delivering a formal Declaration to this effect, and being joined by Metternich, it was resolved to admit Talleyrand to the Conference of January 11th. On the 12th Hardenberg

sent in a new plan for the reconstruction of Prussia, and the crisis was so soon felt to be over that Stein writes to his wife on the 26th :.

> We have still the hope that our affairs will be up to a certain point ended in 10 to 15 days and that I may be able to take my leave on the 15th February. I am extremely impatient to go, and wish to see the end of a situation which is in every respect, in every way, pernicious; and although we may foresee that the whole will be only superficially settled and varnished over, yet we may look to enjoy some years of peace, and that is what we pressingly need. The slowness and narrowness of the Austrians delays and embitters everything.

This last sentence refers to a negotiation between England and Austria on the Saxon question which was going on at this time. The result of it was seen at the Conference of January 28th, at which Austria handed in a new proposal for settling the controversy. It was a proposal which marked the termination of the crisis, and was partly to be explained by the information which began to come in from France of the unpopularity and insecurity of the restored Bourbons. Austria now made a good point against the Prussian scheme, in which it had been proposed to indemnify the King of Saxony on the Rhine, by remarking that this was to endanger Germany by placing at the disposal of France the principal member and the martyr of the Rhenish Confederation; she repeated her proposal of a partition of Saxony, but showed her improved feeling by consenting to allow Prussia a larger share than before. A serious intention of settling the question by a compromise now showed itself on all sides. The Emperor Francis recommended Har-

denberg to come to an understanding with Castlereagh, who was on the point of leaving Vienna to strengthen the hands of Lord Liverpool's Administration in Parliament, and who was eager to settle the most important question of the Congress before his departure. The negotiations between Castlereagh and Hardenberg began about February 3rd. England had a commanding influence over two Powers which were neighbours to Prussia, Hannover and the Netherlands, and Castlereagh caused both to lower their demands. He objected on grounds of trade to granting Leipzig to Prussia, but this difficulty was removed by the Czar, who showed his goodwill to his faithful ally by ceding to her Thorn. On the 8th Prussia presented a new plan, accompanied by a Memoir, in which the Austrian proposals were discussed; and on this new plan, which was accepted, the modern territorial settlement of Prussia is based.

Here, then, closes one most important chapter in Prussian history. As it has been a principal object of this book to mark and describe the series of changes by which the Monarchy of Frederick the Great was transformed into the modern Prussia, we note in this territorial reconstruction of the state accomplished at Vienna a change not less important than those constitutional reforms to which we have given so much attention, and at the same time the last of the changes which that age witnessed. Territorial instability and uncertainty were characteristic of Prussia in those stages of her history, a characteristic which should be specially noted by an English reader, since territorial definiteness and fixedness

are equally characteristic of the history of England. Let us reckon up how many extensions, contractions and variations of frontier had taken place within Stein's memory. He remembered first a long period of expansion, the acquisition of the Franconian Principalities, then of vast districts in Poland, then of the secularised territories, such as that Münster in which he had himself introduced the Prussian administration, then of Hannover. A period of extreme contraction had followed, in which Frederick William had governed a smaller territory than Frederick the Great had left to his successor. Hannover had been lost, and with it all the territory west of the Elbe, with other territory ceded to Saxony, to the Duchy of Warsaw, and to Russia. And now came a new expansion, not gradual as before, but as sudden as the contraction of 1807. It is especially momentous in Prussian history, because it did not by any means restore the state to its old territory, but to new territories equivalent, or nearly so, to the old in population and wealth, but different in geographical position and in the character of the inhabitants. Thus the stuff of which Prussia was composed was constantly changed and renewed in that age, as physiologists tell us the substance of our bodies is constantly suffering change, and we are almost as much puzzled in the case of Prussia as in the case of the human being to understand where the fixed identity can reside.

The new Prussia was about as large as the old had been in its last period, but it was in material points a different country. The principal facts of the new settlement are that Prussia acquired about

half the kingdom of Saxony with about 850,000 inhabitants, and a vast Rhine Province on both sides of the river, with a population of 1,100,000. Somewhat later she gained in addition, by a complicated series of exchanges, a Pomeranian province which had belonged to Sweden, and with it Arndt's Island of Rügen. She sacrificed in return of her former possessions all the acquisitions of the second and third partitions of Poland, except the Duchy of Posen with Thorn, Hannover with the addition of Hildesheim and Goslar, the principalities of Ansbach and Baireuth and her valuable maritime possession of Ostfriesland. The territorial change thus made in Prussia, taken together with the corresponding change made at the same time in Austria, is, perhaps, the fundamental fact of modern German history. It is to be noted first that the population lost to Prussia was for the most part Slavonic, and what she gained for the most part German. Austria, on the other hand, took her indemnities not in Germany but in Italy. Secondly, we should note the importance of the new position given to Prussia on the Rhine. In considering the fall of the old Empire we noticed how much the influence of Austria in Germany was weakened by the loss of her possessions on the western side of it. When she sacrificed Hither Austria and the Netherlands she ceased to *embrace* Germany, and took up a position of mere juxtaposition which led easily to complete separation. At the same time she retired from the position of Germany's champion against France. Now all that was lost in this way to Austria was acquired by Prussia with her Rhine Province.

Prussia now put her arms about Germany, and Prussia now confronted France on one side as she faced Russia on the other. This was seen at the time by the Austrian politicians, but misinterpreted by them with characteristic dulness. Metternich triumphed in having involved Prussia with France, and it is said that the Prussian statesmen also protested that it was only in a spirit of self-sacrifice that they consented to take up that dangerous position in front of the hereditary enemy, to which the country owes its present greatness.

Other features of the new settlement were of great if secondary importance. For instance, Prussia's Rhine Province took the place in part of the Ecclesiastical Electorates of Cologne and Trèves. The great Protestant State took possession of a population which had been for centuries under priestly government, of what might be called the German States of the Church, of the valley which had gone by the name of Priest Street. No long time passed before the serious effects of this were perceived. The state which had easily acquired a reputation for tolerance while it had to do with Protestantism only, began to find the practice of that virtue more difficult, particularly when Ultramontanism began to be powerful. Even in Stein's life-time signs might be discerned of the approaching Culturkampf.

In one respect the new settlement was evidently unsatisfactory, and did not even satisfy the conditions laid down in the Treaty of Paris. It did not give Prussia a continuous territory. Hannover (somewhat enlarged) and Hessen still divided the

two halves of her dominion, lying where the Kingdom of Westphalia had been. The seeds of future changes were evidently laid here, and when the decisive moment came and the sword was drawn to remedy the insufficiency of the German Confederation, Prussia seized the opportunity to remedy at the same time the remaining defect of her territorial constitution, and Hannover and Hessen were annexed.

CHAPTER III.

THE GERMAN QUESTION.

As the startling success of Talleyrand's intrigue had shown that the causes still worked which had led to Napoleon's ascendancy in Germany, another still more startling occurrence was now to show how deeply rooted was his power in France itself. The miraculous revival of the Empire in March was the first of a series of events which prove that Napoleon is not to be compared to Cromwell or other military chiefs who have succeeded for a short time in maintaining an absolute authority over an unwilling people, but that he was really the founder of a new dynasty, and that his throne was based upon a rock which nothing could have shaken but the enormous excesses and crimes of his reign. That such disasters as those of 1812, 1813, and 1814 should have been forgiven and forgotten in a few months is perhaps the greatest proof that any sovereign has ever been able to produce of having acquired the kind of ascendancy in the minds of a people upon which monarchy is properly founded. That this Govern-

ment which France had made for itself, so vital and so calculated for endurance, should be once for all intolerable to the rest of Europe, has been the root of all the misfortunes which France has suffered.

We look at the Revolution and the War of 1815 from Vienna, not from Paris, and consider them in relation to German and not to French or English interests. They need not therefore detain us long.

After the Saxon question had ceased to cause anxiety, the Congress might have been able to devote itself to settling the German Constitution. Some of the principal outlines of the Constitution were indeed discussed in February. But the return of Napoleon in March interrupted the discussion as the Saxon question had interrupted it in November. March and April were principally devoted to the revival of the Coalition and preparations for the campaign. Hence the German Constitution could not be properly taken in hand till May, and it was settled in a series of Conferences occupying the last days of that month.

We have seen that Stein expected late in January to be able to leave Vienna on February 15th. How could he expect this when the German Constitution still remained to be discussed? The answer is that he thought it possible to leave the details of the Constitution to be settled by a German Congress which was to meet at Frankfurt, provided that a declaration were first issued by the Powers which had signed the Treaties of Chaumont and Paris, in which certain principles should be laid down for the direction of the Congress. Such a declaration he draughted and laid it before the Russian Cabinet on

January 17th, accompanied with a review of German affairs since the dissolution of the Empire, which however Pertz does not give. The declaration ran as follows:

The Act of the German Confederation shall be drawn according to principles which shall give power to the general union (first draught: which shall secure the independence of the nation, peace, and political and civil liberty within); the Federal Council shall have the right of peace and war and of settling disputes among the princes, and of guaranteeing the Constitutions of the states; and the Great Powers in the conviction that Europe's interest requires that Germany should be independent and tranquil (first draught: and internally free) make the recognition and guarantee of the political existence of the Confederation in general and of the German Princes in particular conditional on the creation of the Confederation in accordance with such principles.

He added that the following principle must also be adopted:

Estates are to be formed in the dominions of the Princes; to them is to be committed the right of giving their consent to the laws and imposts, and the right of scrutinising the administration, and the rights of these Estates are to be placed under the guarantee of the Confederation: (first draught: and the rights of the mediatised and the noblesse and the rights common to all Germans are to be fixed by the Act of Confederation).

The omissions in the draught which was sent in, omissions apparently intended to propitiate Austria, are supposed to have been advised by Capodistrias.

To issue such a declaration was in Stein's opinion all that was needful to be done at Vienna, and accordingly he hoped to be free in a few days. His opinion, however, did not prevail, and very shortly afterwards we find him warmly engaged in a discussion which he had hoped to evade for a time. He took a leading share during the month of Feb-

ruary in one of those barren controversies which the German question so easily gave rise to, and which served no purpose but to show how insoluble that question was. Wishing sincerely as he did to give unity to Germany, and perceiving clearly by this time that the stubborn opposition of the Middle States, backed by the indifference of Austria, would prevent the setting up of any efficient federal authority, he fell back upon the plan of reviving the imperial dignity. With his countenance this proposal was laid before the Czar on February 9th by Capodistrias, a statesman who attained about this time the zenith of his influence upon European politics. Alexander, after listening to Capodistrias' explanations, asked him the question which, where Germany was concerned, seems always to have been the first that occurred to him, viz., what Stein thought. On learning that Stein's judgment was favourable, he consented that the proposal should be brought forward. Accordingly, Stein and Capodistrias conferred with Hardenberg on the 11th and with Metternich on the 12th upon the subject. On the 17th Stein expounded his own views to Alexander. He painted the internal jealousies of the German courts, which led them distinctly to prefer a condition of general weakness to the establishment of an efficient central authority. He then continued as follows:

The functions of the Federal Diet consist in legislation on subjects of general concern, war administration, foreign relations, the settlement of disputes of the Princes among themselves or with their Estates. Prussia has, of all the German States, on account of her position in the middle of Germany, the most im-

perative reasons to wish for a strong constitution and wise administration of Germany; more than all the others she must dread the decay of the military system, disturbances of internal tranquillity, interruption of the movement of trade; for she needs the military system for her defence, is necessarily involved in all the quarrels of her neighbours, and will reap the greatest advantage from freedom of trade, since she is in possession of the great rivers, and has a superabundance of the products of the earth and of trade in the free circulation of which she is interested.

Austria is pushed to one side of Germany by her geographical position; the federal fortresses do not immediately protect her frontiers, her trade takes the direction of the Danube and the Adriatic; the internal disputes of Germany concern her but slightly; she will chiefly seek to stand well with Bavaria, whose dependence by the way will be secured to her by its position, and her sympathy with Germany will always be subordinate to her momentary convenience. We see her act in this spirit. In the German Committee she shows indifference, she is ready to cede Mainz, Frankfurt and Hanau to Bavaria, and displays an indulgence towards it which borders on weakness in order to attach it firmly to herself and make it serviceable to her in the new struggle which the Polish and Saxon questions seemed likely to bring on.

There exists, moreover, an alienation between the Austrians and the Germans, their grandees are jealous of the precedence of the German Princes, and the mass of the population dislike the intelligence, the movement of intellect and opinion, which appears in their neighbours; the Austrian likes repose; the restlessness and idealism of the Germans, nay the difference in the language causes them discomfort; they attribute all their political calamities to Germany; they forget that it was the army of the German League which conquered Bohemia for them at the battle by the Weissenberg, and that there is not a German family whose ancestors have not shed their blood on the plains of Hungary to secure the possession of it to the House of Austria.

If we allow that Austria has a less solid interest in Germany than Prussia, and that even in its interior there are elements which tend to separation, if nevertheless we hold that the union of Austria with Germany is indispensable to the latter and expedient for the political well-being of Europe in general, we cannot at the

same time refuse to admit that a constitutional link must be forged which may unite Austria again with Germany, and bind the two together by allowing to the former a great influence, a preponderance which may give to their reciprocal relation a foundation in interest and duty.

Since the present condition of Germany exhibits the singular association of a Power of 10,000,000 souls like Prussia with the Principality of Vaduz of 4000, any authority, whether it be confided to a Directory of Five or to a single and sole Supreme Head, will operate in a different way upon parts so different; on the one class it will be influential, on the other imperative; but in both cases it will have a more solid and efficacious existence if it is committed to an individual than to a number, for in the latter case it would be weak in principle and weak through the nature of the instrument it would employ.

Stein ended this interview by requesting permission to leave Vienna. Alexander naturally asked whether the condition of the German affair would allow him to depart; upon which he replied that the chief matters seemed settled, and he thought the question of the imperial dignity would be decided in a few days. This impatience betrays the mixture of eager interest with hopelessness in his feelings on the German question. On second thoughts he saw he must stay, and writes to his wife, 'I am afraid I shall not be able to leave before the 15th of March, as an important affair which greatly interests me compels me to stay longer, to my great regret, for all these splendid fêtes do not compensate the pain caused by the course which things are taking.'

The plan made some way. Wessenberg, one of the Austrian plenipotentiaries, favoured it, and even Metternich did not pronounce against it. The Emperor Francis however was understood to be

adverse. But the chief opposition came from the Prussian politicians, and it is indeed somewhat perplexing to imagine how one who knew Prussian policy so well as Stein can have thought it possible to restore Austria, not to a nominal precedence, but to a real authority over Prussia. Hardenberg declared that it was impossible for him as a Prussian minister to acquiesce in such an increase of Austrian power, particularly at the very moment when Austria was united with France against the Prussian interest. He entreated Stein to let the matter drop. Humboldt drew up a refutation of Stein's arguments, which certainly seems unanswerable:

> The Emperor must have an extensive power if he is to do any good, and such an extensive power Prussia *cannot* and Bavaria *will not* allow to him. This argument is especially strong when applied to the House of Austria, which has lost a great part of its interest in Germany, and has become more than formerly a non-German power. A confederation without a head may have great deficiencies, but it offers the greatest advantages which are attainable at the moment, it alone is free from inconveniences, it alone is possible.

These arguments do not seem to have convinced the Russian party, and Stein answered Hardenberg's entreaties that he would let the matter drop by bidding him convince the Czar in a personal interview, and he drew up a statement of his case which might guide Hardenberg in the counter-statement to be made to Alexander. This paper resembles that from which extracts have been given above; it shows forcibly the danger that the Federation in the absence of a Head will want efficiency, and the necessity, if Austria is to remain united with Ger-

many, of giving her a stronger interest in German affairs, but omits to show how such an ascendancy of Austria could be made consistent with the most necessary interests of Prussia.

The affair seems to have been terminated by Hardenberg's interview with the Czar on March 2nd, at which the invincible repugnance of the Prussian public, and more particularly of the Prussian army, to the scheme, was strongly represented to Alexander. Stein wreaked his disappointment in unsparing criticism of Humboldt's paper, of which Hardenberg did not allow him to have a copy until the interview was over. He was the more bent on leaving Vienna speedily, and seems by his expressions to have lost, at least for the time, that strong regard for Alexander which he had felt ever since the Russian Campaign. 'It was the effect,' he writes, 'of distraction and want of depth in one (Alexander), of the dulness and coldness of age in others (Hardenberg, perhaps also Rasumofsky), of feebleness, commonness, and dependence on Metternich in a third (Nesselrode), and frivolity in all, that no great or grandly beneficial idea in consistency and unity could be realised. To escape from this unfortunate situation would require only an energetic resolution, and it is most advisable to take it at once before the whole wretchedness of it is visible, to withdraw from the annoyances of the position, and wash my hands of the responsibility.' And so he tells his wife again, 'I hope to leave on the 15th and return to my family for good, too happy to be quit of the undefined and insecure position I have been in since 1812 (i.e. of my connexion with Alexander).'

He was a good deal occupied at this time in discussing the claims to indemnity put forward by Bavaria. I shall not ask the reader to enter into this subject, but I mention it because it brought him into communication with the Duke of Wellington, who relieved Lord Castlereagh at Vienna in the month of February. He had also a conference with the Duke on the German Question, which ended with the Duke begging Stein to call on him as often as he had anything to say.

Swiss affairs also occupied much of Stein's attention from the first meeting of the Congress. The fall of Napoleon's ascendancy had been followed by the cancelling of the Act of Mediation on December 29th, 1813, and a deputation was sent to obtain from the Congress recognition of the federal and territorial arrangements which were proposed in its place. A commission of Ministers was appointed in October to negotiate with this deputation. Austria named Wessenberg, Prussia Humboldt, England Sir Charles Stewart, and France the Duke of Dalberg. Stein presided in the commission as the representative of Russia. The conferences began on November 15th, and were held at intervals till January 16th. At the last conference a general resolution was adopted, which was afterwards referred to the Congress itself. As I have not room for a full examination of the proceedings of this commission I pass it by with the simple statement of the part which Stein took in it. It is worth remarking that there sat in these conferences, besides the ministers above named, one who is still among us; he was then known as

Mr Stratford Canning, and was the English representative in Switzerland. It is to this witness that Pertz owes a statement about a mode of communication with the Czar, which Stein was led to practise at Vienna on account of the Czar's defective hearing. He carried slips of paper on which necessary facts and dates were marked, and used to hand them to the Czar at the right moment.

When the 15th of March approached Stein began to be doubtful whether after all he should be able to quit Vienna as soon as he had expected. On the 11th came the news of Napoleon's landing in Provence. On the 13th Stein writes to his wife:

> Bonaparte's arrival in the South of France causes the time of our departure to depend on the news we may get of the character of his enterprise; it *may* be nothing but the attempt of an adventurer, but it is possible that Bonaparte appears as the head of a great party.

The reappearance of Napoleon was calculated to rouse Stein no less than to pain him. We find him active as early as the 8th, that is when it was known that Napoleon had left Elba, but not yet that he had landed in France. He pressed strongly for a Declaration on the part of the Eight Powers who had signed the Peace of Paris that they were purposed and determined to maintain that Treaty. Such a Declaration was voted on the 13th, and to it was added the political excommunication of Bonaparte, by which he was delivered over to public vengeance as an enemy and disturber of the peace of the world. We might describe this act in language borrowed from Napoleon's own proscription of Stein, and say that by it 'the person called Bonaparte (le nommé Bonaparte), seeking to excite troubles in

Europe, was declared an enemy' of the Great Powers; and Stein himself remarks, 'A strange revolution of affairs! he who proscribed me on December 16th, 1808, is now put in a similar but much worse condition by a resolution of the Great Powers of Europe!' But Stein does not say, and Pertz seems to strain the facts in order to satisfy the instinct of poetical justice, when he asserts, that the proscription of Napoleon was originally suggested to the Congress by Stein. All that seems certain is that he recommended prompt and energetic measures.

It would early occur to Stein to ask himself how this new Revolution would affect the German question. Perhaps it was not unnatural that he should see in it a new impulse likely to prove very beneficial. Nothing would ripen a Federation better than a danger to Germany from without. He began at once to urge the necessity of settling the fundamental points without delay, and among these fundamental points he included probably the restoration of the imperial dignity. We have noted the enormous difficulties which stood in the way of this scheme, but it seems likely that Stein was not simply misled by his wishes or by some inherited sentiment of knightly devotion to the Emperor, but that he had determined upon a definite course of action by which he believed the difficulties might be met. We must remember that this is the man who was himself called German Emperor. During the past war he had actually administered a sort of Federal Government of Germany. If the new war now beginning should last any time, he might find himself again at

the head of a Central Administration, and we can conceive that he may have hit upon some plan of converting this exceptional War Administration by means of resolutions of the Congress into a permanent institution and the germ of a new Empire. On the 23rd an appeal to the Great German Powers from the Middle and Small States in favour of a restoration of the imperial dignity was delivered to Metternich and Hardenberg. Their answers were ambiguous and not favourable as regards the particular point, but Metternich gave an assurance that the Congress should not separate without laying the foundation of a German Constitution, and we can conceive that the agitation might excite Stein's hopes. It appears that on the 31st he wrote a letter to Kotschubei—unfortunately Pertz does not give it—in which he referred to some method which he had in his mind of being useful to his country and forwarding its well-being directly, provided a Federation came into existence. At the same time his party began to throw out hints to the same effect in the Rhine Mercury.

Let us imagine that the imperial dignity were revived with certain substantial attributions. The new Emperor would want a Minister. Metternich would continue to be the Minister of the Emperor of Austria: who would be nominated as Minister to the Emperor of Germany? Who but Stein? And if neither Francis nor Metternich had any personal kindness to Stein, would not the Czar be certain to recommend his nomination in the most urgent manner?

If some such plan as this occurred to him it was

soon abandoned for some reason which I cannot trace. His letters continue to breathe the same eagerness to depart and the same expectation that the German question will be settled in a day or two. Up to the 23rd his purpose holds of leaving at the end of the month. On the 28th he writes:

I cannot leave before the decision about the German affair and the basis of the Federation; it is extremely annoying to me to be constantly detained and kept in the most painful uncertainty about my departure.

On April 2nd he writes

We hope that the exertions of the Allies will be crowned with success, but they are not the less on that account painful and uncertain, and we must rely on Providence for everything. The unity of the Princes is very great, their military resources infinite, and we hope that they will be used with wisdom and energy. I hope to be able to leave between the 10th and the 15th, as the Emperor will probably visit Prag about that time to see his troops arrive—in any case I shall make an excursion to Berlin, but I am not yet in a condition to speak of my further destination, or whether it will be possible to carry out my plans of retirement.

On the 7th:

Dear Love, your letter of March 31st shows much despondency; I beg you not to give way to such a feeling. Providence has rescued us from worse situations and will as ever graciously protect us. Bonaparte's condition is as far as possible from secure; he has the army for him but the nation against him; the South is arming, and in the interior he has to share his popularity with the Republicans. They want to treat him as a tool; the only question is whether it will suit him to be used in that way. There is a great determination to fight him vigorously and the resources collected are infinite, and the generals in command the same who made their way triumphantly to Paris. All these considerations ought to reassure you, but I am afraid you are alarmed and agitated by the lamentations of those ladies v. B. and v. B.

Then comes a flash which to my mind throws some light on the quarrel with Niebuhr in the summer of 1813.

I *hate* these lamentations and alarms; nothing discourages and weakens so much in the moment of decision, nothing torments and disturbs so much in the time of suspense as these indefinite lamentations and alarms. I am still hoping to visit Berlin in the middle of the month. Good bye, dear Love! courage, trust in God, constancy! Kiss the children.

On the 19th:

A commission that has been given me has detained me here, but I hope to have done with it at latest on the 22nd, and to be able to leave immediately afterwards. The Princes will probably be on the banks of the Rhine about the middle of May, in order to hasten the undertakings that have been set on foot, and I hope to be back in Nassau about that time. Our intelligence from the South of France up to the 6th is good; Lyon is believed to be taken, the troops assembled in France on the northern frontier very weak, the Government still unsettled—that may quiet timorous people. Prince Radzivill will be back there by this time; he will, no doubt, have told you of the fall I had on the staircase at Count Stackelberg's; it did not hurt me to speak of.

One more extract; it is dated April 25th.

My departure which was fixed for to-day has had to be put off for ten or fourteen days at least; I had taken my parting audience of the Emperor Francis on the 22nd, and was bidding farewell to the Grand Princess Catharina on the 23rd, when the Emperor Alexander came and pressed me so strongly to postpone my departure till the winding up of the German affairs, and gave such distinct assurances that they should be wound up, that I thought myself obliged to abandon the thought of departure in order to avoid the reproaches I should certainly incur for going away at a moment so important and so decisive for our Fatherland. You too would have blamed me, dear Love, and I am sure of your approval; though it costs me something every way to renounce the happiness of returning to my family. I think I shall be able to come to Berlin even if my stay in Vienna should be prolonged against all

expectation by a fortnight or three weeks. For reasons which I will explain to you when we meet, I do not wish to follow the Head-quarters; I have resolved to pass the summer at Nassau and in the country.

In this way Stein's stay in Vienna was prolonged into the month of May, when the German question was actually settled.

Much as it cost Stein his stay was of little use. Disappointment marked the settlement of the German question, as perplexity had attended the discussion of it. A Prussian scheme in 14 Articles had been drawn up by Humboldt early in April. It was now revised and put before Metternich in the name of Humboldt and Hardenberg on May 1st. But still Metternich did not reopen the deliberations on the German question. Stein tried to hasten his movements by bringing to bear upon him the influence of Alexander. With Alexander's consent he draughted a Note, in which Russia was to say that:

> The condition of war with France in which Germany finds herself increases the necessity of uniting her different States by a federal league in order to create a centre for action with which the different military establishments may be connected and by which they may be supported and guided. The creation of such a centre of action is a guarantee for the happy result of the war, and from this point of view Russia feels entitled and bound to insist that it should be formed and set in activity.

This Note, however, was not presented, because on the day after it was draughted, on May 7th, Metternich announced his intention of bringing on the subject.

The method pursued was to fuse together the Prussian scheme recently presented and an Austrian scheme which had been drawn by Wessenberg in

December and was now revised. This was done in a series of Conferences which now took place, and the result of their labours was laid before the Congress on May 23rd, in the form of a draught Act of Federation. On the next day Stein laid the following criticism of it before the Russian Cabinet:

The different plans for a German Confederation which have hitherto been discussed contained the proposition, 'to create Estates (Landstände) for the protection of liberty and property with the right of participating in taxation and legislation and guaranteed by the Confederation.'

This principle received the approval of His Majesty the Emperor in the Note which he caused to be presented on November 11th. A great part of the Princes acknowledged it in their Declaration of November 16th; it served as a basis in the deliberations between the King of Würtemberg and his Estates. It is found in the plans of Federation which the Cabinet of Berlin has submitted. It was therefore to be expected that it would appear in the bases on which Austria and Prussia have just come to an agreement. Yet we find only in the 10th Article the vague proposition, 'In all German States there shall exist a Constitution by Estates,' without any enactment about their powers or about a guarantee for them. In this way every principle is abandoned upon which the political arrangements of the nation may be based.

Thus without a moment's delay Stein branded the new Federation with the character which afterwards was clearly proved to belong to it, a character very unlike that of the old Empire. The Federation resembled the Empire in one most conspicuous point, in its complete inefficiency for the first purpose of a Federation, namely, foreign defence. But in another main point it differed for the worse, it was considerably more pervaded with the principles of absolute monarchy. The Empire had been composed of states of three different types—

monarchical, ecclesiastical and municipal states. Of these the latter were republican, while the ecclesiastical states might be classed as elective monarchies, and even the hereditary monarchies were under some control, either from Assemblies of Estates with customary powers or at any rate from the Emperor. But the new Federation was almost wholly monarchical, its states were on the average larger and less controllable, and the type of monarchy was Napoleonic.

This is the more to be noted as we might otherwise easily misunderstand the zeal which Stein here shows for parliamentary government. In Prussia we have seen Stein favourable indeed to parliaments, but disposed to be cautious and wary in creating them. In the thirteen months of his Ministry he had not introduced them, and he certainly had no idea of superseding the personal government which he found in Prussia by parliamentary government such as we see it in England. If now he shows himself most anxious that in the new Federation Estates with substantial powers shall be set up everywhere, he is not thinking of Prussia. Though we have the habit of thinking of the old Prussian state as one of the most extreme instances of despotism, Stein did not think of it so. He held, as we know, that it wanted great reforms, but he never seems to charge its Government with harshness or brutality, rather with weakness. It is of Würtemberg and Bavaria not of Prussia that he is thinking; it is not rigour in government that he is afraid of, but insolent selfishness; he objects to Asiatic sultanism, not Spartan severity.

His remonstrance had no effect, and it was evident that he could do no more for Germany at Vienna. Alexander with Frederick William departed on May 26th, and the Emperor Francis on the 27th. On the 28th Stein himself set out for Nassau, where he intended to pass the summer. The Act of Confederation was signed on June 8th, and we find Stein repeating his criticisms in another memoir addressed to the Russian Cabinet. His verdict is that from so faulty a Constitution is to be expected a very faint influence on Germany's happiness, and that we must hope that the despotic principles of which several Cabinets cannot yet shake themselves free will gradually be undermined by public opinion, the freedom of the press, and the example which several Princes, especially the King of Prussia, seem desirous to give by imparting to their subjects a wise and beneficial Constitution.

CHAPTER IV.

ALSACE AND LORRAINE.

STEIN'S last appearance on the stage of European politics is more interesting now than it could have been at any time before the war of 1870. We saw him at the first Peace of Paris taking his share in a settlement of France which, whether or no it was the best settlement possible at the time, has not proved capable of maintaining itself. We see him at the second Peace of Paris protesting against another settlement which has equally failed to endure, and earnestly recommending instead a settlement like that which was adopted more than half a century later after another tremendous war.

Had Stein accepted the Bourbons simply from a sense of necessity, or did their failure, when it was so suddenly revealed to the world by Napoleon's adventure of 1815, take him by surprise? I suspect that he was in some degree deceived in them, and that in general his judgment in French affairs, partly from that preference for the internal depart-

ment of politics which we have remarked in him all along, partly from the intense international alienation which had been produced by more than twenty years of war, was by no means so sure as in German affairs. There is a tone of annoyance, as of a man found out in a mistake, in the comments he makes on the first intelligence of Napoleon's enterprise, and in his attempt to show that the movement is confined to the army. Thus on March 18th,

> We are much excited by the news which arrive of the insurrection of the French army and the inert inactive behaviour of the people. On all sides the most vigorous measures are adopted to resist and put down these Janissaries; but the exertions demanded, the dangers incurred, at the moment when we thought we were entering the harbour are great and disquieting. The present generation seems condemned to be for ever without rest or tranquillity such as may allow it to give itself to peaceful occupations!

And again:

> The Revolution in France is a consequence of the deep corruption of the nation, which actuated by revenge and rapacity preferred the rule of a tyrant to the milder and legal government of a rational pious King, received the former everywhere with rapture and gladly made itself ready for wars of conquest and plunder. It forgot the oppression intellectual and physical under which it had lived, the arbitrary power that disposed of its life and property, the annihilation of trade, the waste of its children's lives, and only longed once more to fall on the neighbouring nations and rob and oppress them. And so the signal for a new contest is given. God will bless the arms of the Allies, and chastise the corrupted nation for its crimes. The French Embassy which here caused such confusion and mischief, the Bavarian which sought to blow up the flame of war, were now obliged to apply for the help of Prussia and Russia; the former of which it would have destroyed and the latter exposed to the suspicion of Europe. They declare that the Revolution is simply brought about by a conspiracy in the

army which forces a tyrant on a nation which is for the most part well-disposed.

In the war of 1815 itself Stein has little share. But he has his part in a well-known incident which took place at Vienna, while the European Coalition was reorganising itself. Very early on April 9th, Alexander sent for him, and on his appearance showed him a document which had just been sent him from Paris by Budiakin, who had remained behind to watch the course of affairs when the Russian Embassy left on the arrival of Napoleon. The document was nothing less than the Secret Treaty against Russia and Prussia, which had been signed on January 3rd by France, England, and Austria. At the flight of the French Court it had been left behind with other papers relating to the affairs of the Congress by Jaucourt, who had presided at the French Foreign Office in the absence of Talleyrand, and it had been discovered by Napoleon. He had sent Maret with it to Budiakin with the message that Napoleon 'did not permit himself to make any remark upon' the affair, but thought it due to the Emperor that such a document should not be withheld from him.' Alexander as he showed it to Stein said, 'I have sent also for Prince Metternich, and wish you to be present as a witness of our conversation.' Metternich soon appeared; the paper was put before him and he was asked whether he knew it. He looked at it in silence and without any change of countenance. Then when he seemed about to speak Alexander prevented him and said, 'Metternich, so long as we live no word must pass between us again on this affair. We have other things to do now. Napoleon is

returned and therefore our alliance must be firmer than ever.' He threw the paper into the fire and dismissed both Ministers.

This story was first published in 1851 in the Memoirs of General v. Wolzogen, who professes to have had it from Stein's own mouth. It shows Alexander in his usual character, full of generous impulses of which however he is too conscious, and yielding to those impulses with all the more ardour when they happen to push him in the same direction as his interest. It was no doubt very noble to forgive an injury; but what would have become of Alexander's fame as the conqueror of Napoleon if, in order to avenge it, he had suffered the Coalition to be dissolved and the whole work of 1814 to be undone again? It is also interesting to notice his choice of Stein as a witness. Did he choose him as the most independent man available? or as the friend whom he most desired to be at hand when he performed a virtuous action? or as the best representative of that alliance of Russia and Prussia against which the Secret Treaty had been directed? In any case I cannot help thinking that he chose the man whose presence at that moment must have been the severest punishment of Metternich. Probably Stein's countenance during the scene was by no means so impassive as we are told Metternich's was.

In June, Stein paid a short visit to the Czar in his Head-quarters at Heidelberg. Here he preached the restoration to Germany of Alsace and Lorraine, which he wanted to erect into a principality for the Archduke Charles.

Blücher writes to Stein from Noyelle on June 22nd,

I hope, my honoured friend, you are satisfied with me. In three days I have fought two bloody battles and five sharp engagements, and invested three fortresses besides. I have to thank my own iron will and the assistance of Gneisenau with the ardour of the troops and their bravery for everything. There has been no want of representations and complaints about excessive exertion and danger, but I have put that sort of thing quite on one side. The day after to-morrow I shall have an interview with Wellington, and then forwards (vorwärts)!....I beg you to tell the Emperor of Russia that if I had had more Cossacks and Light Cavalry with me very few of the French would have been left.

Napoleon has lost everything, his chest, his jewels and his whole equipage: he was so surprised that he jumped out of the carriage without sword or hat and escaped on horseback. His sword, hat and cloak are in my hands. Farewell; I wish it were at an end, I am longing for rest! Make Alexander give me a little estate near Birnbaum; then we should be neighbours; I should like to spend my last days quietly in the country.

The second Treaty of Paris seems at first sight a striking exception to the maxim that there is no magnanimity in the behaviour of nations towards each other. In the former settlement, though France had been treated with forbearance, the positive forfeitures exacted from her were very large, since she was deprived of her whole Empire, the fruit of 20 years of war. Her offence against Europe was now infinitely greater. Whereas before it might be thought that she was no free agent but only the tool of a despotic ruler, she had now deliberately rejected a Government which, whatever might be its faults, gave the nation a Parliament, to take back the very tyrant who had reduced her Parliaments to a nullity. Nor had she the excuse of being able to

show that she was capable of supporting in the field the Government she had preferred.

Napoleon had thrown down the gauntlet to all Europe, and Europe was setting in motion against him forces which did not fall much short of a million of men. An obstinate struggle might be expected, for who could calculate the resources of Napoleon's genius? But the result was a surprise even greater than that which Europe had experienced when the great Prussian army was overwhelmed at Jena. For the catastrophe of Waterloo was far greater and more sudden than that of Jena. Napoleon did but touch the extreme end of the long line which was drawn round France, and here in three days the campaign was decided; Paris capitulated on the 19th day after the commencement of the campaign; and the definitive Treaty of Peace was signed before the end of the year (November 20th); so that to crush France in this war cost the Allies not much more than half the time it had cost France to crush Prussia eight years before. These were circumstances in which France might seem to have exposed herself to the just vengeance of Europe. Yet it may be said that Europe forgave her. She was left, according to the strongly-expressed opinion of the Duke of Wellington who was himself principally responsible for the settlement, 'in too great strength for the rest of Europe.' The result was that the Napoleonic system was revived a generation later and a new Napoleonic war was waged, after which the punishment was inflicted on France which had been remitted in 1815.

But in 1815 the whole question was fully argued, and it will therefore be desirable to lay before the reader the principal documents. On August 11th Lord Liverpool wrote as follows to Lord Castlereagh:

We have received your despatch No. 27, of the 3rd instant, with the enclosed Memorandum from the Duke of Wellington, on the subject of the military proposition to be made by the Allies to the French Government. With respect to the two *projets* contained in this memorandum for the occupation of the French frontier, we are disposed on every account to place entire confidence in whatever may be the ultimate military judgment of the Duke of Wellington upon them. However desirous we may be of seeing the government of Louis XVIII. popular in France, we do not feel that we should be justified in endeavouring to accomplish the object by the sacrifice of everything which is judged important for the general security of Europe. We doubt very much whether forbearance on the part of the Allies would really have the effect under the present circumstances of rendering the King popular, and we are decidedly of opinion that we may thereby deprive ourselves of the means of giving that support to him on which for some time his authority must essentially depend. We wish therefore that this question may be considered on military principles.... As we have not yet seen the Austrian or Prussian *projets* we do not know the extent of the views of those Governments, but we are informed that they propose to a certain degree the principle of permanent cessions by France, at least as far as regards the external line of fortresses. We ought not to forget that these Governments have more of common interest with us in the whole of this question than the Government of Russia; and that though we must all have deeply at heart the consolidation of the legitimate Government in France, we should consider that our success in this object must necessarily be very uncertain, and that the security of the neighbouring countries against France may be much more easily attained than the rendering France orderly and pacific.

To this Lord Castlereagh answers on August 17th as follows:

I quite concur with the remark contained in your last letter that the true interests of Great Britain are much more identified with those of Austria and Prussia in the existing crisis than with those of Russia; but I must at the same time observe that both these Courts require to be narrowly watched at the present moment with respect to the mode in which they pursue their particular views, in order that we may not be involved in a course of policy in which Great Britain has no principle of common interest with them but the reverse.

The first point is that I much suspect neither Austria nor Prussia, and certainly none of the smaller Powers, have any sincere desire to bring the present state of things to a speedy termination; so long as they can feed, clothe and pay their armies at the expense of France, and put English subsidies into their pockets besides, which nothing can deprive them of previous to the 1st of April, 1816, but the actual conclusion of a Treaty with France, you cannot suppose they will be *in a great hurry* to come to a final settlement since the war may be said to have closed.... The Prussian Minister of Finance, Bülow, yesterday told me that he did not calculate the Allied force now in France lower than 900,000 men, and their expense, including forage and waste, at less than 3 livres per man per day, which is about £112,000 a day, or £36,000,000 a year, exclusive of pay and clothing, the latter being provided by distinct requisitions, the former by the revenue of the departments occupied.... From what fell from Prince Hardenberg some time since, I apprehend much opposition to my proposal in that quarter; and I have found Prince Metternich more impracticable upon this point than on any I have ever discussed with him.

Much to my surprise, in my discussion with Prince Metternich on this subject, I received not only a concurrence, but a considerable degree of support from the Russian Minister; and he has since told me that the Emperor will agree to my proposition of appropriating one-third of the whole contribution to fortifications; which, considering the remote interest Russia has in this arrangement, is a very liberal proceeding on his Imperial Majesty's part.

There is another point of view in which we must be on our guard with these Courts. Their politics at this moment receive an extraordinary impulse from the public sentiment of Germany,

from the temper of the smaller Powers, and from the desire they each feel not to yield to the other the influence in Germany which belongs to what is most popular. No doubt the prevailing sentiment throughout Germany is in favour of territorially reducing France. After all the people have suffered, and with the ordinary inducements of some fresh acquisitions, it is not wonderful that it should be so: but it is one thing to wish the thing done and another to maintain it when done; and in calculating the chances of the latter we ought to be aware that none of these Powers can for any time keep up war-establishments, or having once laid them down find the means of speedily resuming them; and that if the course adopted materially increases the chances of early war with France, these acquisitions may be of short duration, whilst our chances of an interval of peace will be diminished, and we may be obliged, in order to keep France within any bounds, to take the weight of the war in a pecuniary sense upon ourselves.

The more I wish the alternative, the more I am impressed with the wisdom of what the Duke of Wellington states upon this subject in his letter to me, when he says that he deems the possession of a certain number of French fortresses for an extended period of time in itself preferable to the actual cession of the same places, and for this obvious reason, that the one is compatible with French connexion, the other leads to unite all Frenchmen against us, or rather against the Power that shall be found in possession of their spoils; and as the King of the Netherlands would probably be the first to be attacked, we have more reason to weigh well the course to be pursued.

From these letters it appears that the English Ministers at home at first were disposed to take a different view from those in France. Both letters refer to an expressed opinion of the Duke of Wellington; this therefore may follow:

Paris, August 11th, to Lord Castlereagh.

My opinion is that the French Revolution and the Treaty of Paris have left France in too great strength for the rest of

Europe, weakened as all the Powers of Europe have been by the wars in which they have been engaged with France, by the destruction of all the fortresses and strongholds in the Low Countries and Germany, principally by the French, and by the ruin of the finances of all the Continental Powers.

Notwithstanding that this opinion is as strongly, if not more strongly, impressed upon my mind than upon that of any of those whose papers have lately come under my consideration, I doubt its being in our power now to make such an alteration in the relations of France with other Powers as will be of material benefit.

First, I conceive that our declarations and our treaties, and the accession, though irregular in form, which we allowed Louis XVIII. to make to that of the 25th March, must prevent us from making any very material inroad upon the state of possession of the Treaty of Paris. I do not concur in —— ——'s (W. v. Humboldt's?) reasoning either that the guarantee in the treaty of the 25th March was intended to apply only to ourselves, or that the conduct of the French people since the 20th March ought to deprive them of the benefit of that guarantee. The French people submitted to Bonaparte; but it would be ridiculous to suppose that the Allies would have been in possession of Paris in a fortnight after one battle fought if the French people in general had not been favourably disposed to the cause which the Allies were supposed to favour. In the north of France they certainly were so disposed, and there is no doubt they were so in the south, and indeed throughout France, excepting in Champagne, *Alsace*, parts of Burgundy, *Lorraine* and Dauphiné. The assistance which the King and his party in France gave to the cause was undoubtedly of a passive description; but the result of the operations of the Allies has been very different from what it would have been if the disposition of the inhabitants of the country had led them to oppose the Allies.

In my opinion therefore the Allies have no just right to make any material inroad on the Treaty of Paris, although that treaty leaves France too strong in relation to other Powers; but I think I can show that the real interests of the Allies should lead them to adopt the measures which justice in this instance requires from them.

My objection to the demand of a great cession from France

upon this occasion is that it will defeat the object which the Allies have held out to themselves in the present and the preceding wars.

That which has been their object has been to put an end to the French Revolution, to obtain peace for themselves and their people, to have the power of reducing their overgrown military establishments and the leisure to attend to the internal concerns of their several nations, and to improve the situation of their people. The Allies took up arms against Bonaparte because it was certain that the world could not be at peace as long as he should possess or should be in a situation to attain supreme power in France: and care must be taken in making the arrangements consequent upon our success that we do not leave the world in the same unfortunate situation respecting France that it would have been in if Bonaparte had continued in possession of his power.

It is certain that whether the cession should be agreed to or not by the King the situation of the Allies would be very embarrassing. If the King were to refuse to agree to the cession, and were to throw himself upon his people, there can be no doubt that those divisions would cease which have hitherto occasioned the weakness of France. The Allies might take the fortresses and provinces which might suit them, but there would be no genuine peace for the world; no nation could disarm, no sovereign could turn his attention from the affairs of this country. If the King were to agree to make the concession, which, from all that one hears, is an event by no means probable, the Allies must be satisfied and must retire; but I would appeal to the experience of the transactions of last year for a statement of the situation in which we should find ourselves.

There is no statesman who, with those facts before his eyes, with the knowledge that the justice of the demand of a great cession from France under existing circumstances is at least doubtful, and that the cession would be made against the inclination of the sovereign and all descriptions of his people, would venture to recommend to his Sovereign to consider himself at peace, and to place his armies upon a peace establishment. We must on the contrary, if we take this large cession, consider the operations of the war as deferred till France shall find a suitable opportunity of endeavouring to regain what she has

lost, and after having wasted our resources in the maintenance of overgrown military establishments in time of peace, we shall find how little useful the cession we shall have acquired will be against a national effort to regain them.

Revolutionary France is more likely to distress the world than France, however strong in her frontier, under a regular Government; and that is the situation in which we ought to endeavour to place her.

With this view I prefer the temporary occupation of some of the strong places, and to maintain for a time a strong force in France, both at the expense of the French Government and under strict regulation, to the permanent cession of even all the places which in my opinion ought to be occupied for a time. There is no doubt that the troops of the Allies stationed in France will give strength and security to the Government of the King, and that their presence will give the King leisure to form his army in such manner as he may think proper. The expectation also of the arrival of the period at which the several points occupied should be evacuated, would tend to the preservation of peace, while the engagement to restore them to the King or his legitimate heirs or successors, would have the effect of giving additional stability to his throne. . . . This term of years, besides the advantage of introducing into France a system and habits of peace after twenty-five years of war, will enable the Powers of Europe to restore their finances; it will give them time and means to reconstruct the great artificial bulwarks of their several countries, to settle their Governments and to consolidate their means of defence. France, it is true, will still be powerful, probably more powerful than she ought to be in relation to her neighbours; but if the Allies do not waste their time and their means, the state of security of each and of the whole in relation to France will at the end of the period be materially improved and will probably leave but little to desire.

A similar view was presented in the name of Russia by Count Capodistrias (July 28th). He distinguished two classes of guarantees which Europe might exact from France, moral and material guarantees, the former resting on opinion, the latter on

power. In the first rank of the former he placed 'a Constitution which should base the authority of the King's Government on that of a National Assembly, and should reconcile the interests which have grown up in 25 years of Revolution with those of the Monarchy;' the principal material guarantee consisted in diminution, either by direct or indirect means, of the power of the French nation, *i.e.* in occupation of French territory, either permanently or for a time, by foreign troops. Referring then to the Declarations with which the Allies opened the war, he denied that the war gave them any right of conquest. The war having been undertaken to maintain the Treaty of Paris could not operate to annul that Treaty. The Congress had constructed a European Balance upon the assumption of a certain amount of power in France; the work would therefore need to be done over again if this basis should now be altered. Moreover, if the attempt were made to force the French nation to recognize the legitimate Government by diminishing its power, the legitimate Government would come to be regarded as a misfortune to the country, and all the horrors of the Revolution would be justified in the nation's eyes. He drew the conclusion that Europe's principal dependence must be in the existence of a liberal Government in France, but to this moral guarantee must be added the material one of a perpetual exclusion of the Bonaparte family and a military occupation of France for a limited time.

The Russian view is similar to the English, but has the verbal difference which might be expected from the ostentatious Liberalism of the Czar, that

the Government of the Bourbons is represented as a guarantee to Europe, not as being legitimate, but rather as being liberal.

Metternich, on the other hand, while he granted that the war was not, and ought not to be suffered to become, a war of conquest, maintained nevertheless that a temporary occupation was an inadequate material guarantee, since there was no prospect of a peaceful Government being established in France for a long time, and he believed that such a military occupation would be felt as a greater grievance than a forfeiture of territory. He insisted that four demands must be made, a war-indemnity, the establishment of a form of government that might suit those of the other Great Powers, a temporary submission to measures of internal police necessary both to the French Government and to Europe, but besides (this demand he placed second) a real and permanent guarantee consisting in *the substitution for her offensive position of a defensive position more similar to that of the other Powers.* In explanation of this demand Metternich wrote:

> The aggressive attitude of France rests on the aggressive positions which it has taken up since Louis XIV. through the establishment of great military centres and fortresses at points so advanced that the formation and organisation of armies intended only to defend the country is prevented; it rests also on a system of fortresses out of all proportion to the defensive means of the neighbouring states, or to the means which they ever could apply to the restoration of a military balance. France's system of defence has been formed partly by the conquest of fortresses which she retained and increased, such as the fortresses in French Flanders, partly by the formation of new fortresses in conquered territories, such as the strong places of Alsace, Lorraine, Upper

Burgundy, and the southern line; in recent times it has acquired new value (1) by the formation of the National Guard, which suffices for the garrisoning of all the fortresses, and allows France to cross the frontier without danger with its whole regular army; (2) by the destruction of all the fortresses in the Netherlands and in Germany by the French in all wars since Louis XIV. Ehrenbreitstein, Philippsburg, Ingolstadt and other places of the greatest importance have been entirely dismantled, all towns like Frankfurt and Ulm which had walls and means of defence have been deprived of them; Savoy has been obliged to promise not to fortify the mountain-passes. All the wars undertaken by all French Governments since Louis XIV. concur to prove that that Power has formed with unalterable perseverance a system of fortification and defence at the expense of its neighbours; it would be unworthy of the Powers who devote themselves to the noble task of restoring the repose of Europe on strong and sound foundations to consent to deceive themselves about incontestable facts; that this system of aggressive fortresses is far less a product of the principles which have caused the revolutionary wars, than an inherent principle of the French Monarchy, and that it was owing to nothing but this system of fortresses that it needed the total destruction of the French army in the campaign of 1812, the loss of the whole stores of those fortresses, and still more the united exertions of Europe, to secure the success of our armies in 1813, 1814, and 1815.

Unquestionably the conviction of the French that wars cost nothing but men, or at the utmost money, but that the property of individuals cannot be destroyed, and that the citizens do not run the risk of being exposed to the hardships inseparable from the presence of foreign armies, is one of the causes which gave the Revolutionary Government its principal means of aggression: to give peculiar weight to this consideration it is only necessary to know the selfishness and want of public spirit which is peculiar to the French.

Accordingly it is necessary to the permanent weal of Europe that France should lose the points of aggression which the Peace of Paris left her, and that the fortresses of the first line should either pass under foreign dominion, and serve for the future for the defence of the neighbouring frontiers, or at least should be razed.

But, as the result has shown, the Power most nearly interested in the question was Prussia. We pass therefore to the opinions expressed by the Prussian representatives.

Humboldt wrote as follows:

When the Powers issued their Declaration of March 13th, the lawful Government still subsisted and was only attacked by a handful of people, or at least seemed so. For assuredly this handful of people would never have overturned the throne but for the indifference with which at least a very large part of the people—some with satisfaction, others without pain or regret—awaited the issue of the approaching Revolution. At that time the Powers were really allies of Louis XVIII. The Declaration promises assistance to the King of France and to the nation which was supposed to be united with him, and even that only in case such assistance should be asked. It assumes an independent Government in France and considers its reputation.

The Treaty of March 25th also is conceived in the same sense. The 8th Article declares its object to be the support of France against Napoleon, and the appeal of Louis XVIII. to the power of the Allies is mentioned. His Most Christian Majesty did not accede to this Treaty by subscribing a formal treaty; it was considered enough to require and receive a Note of his Minister expressing concurrence.

But at the moment of the ratification of this Treaty the circumstances had altered. The Government of Great Britain made a distinct Declaration, and all the other Powers adopted it, that it did not undertake the obligation of conducting the war with the object of imposing a Government on France. Misfortunes now so gloriously repaired had driven the lawful King out of his kingdom; the Government and France were officially distinguished from each other; it was regarded as possible that the Government might not re-enter into the possession of its rights. The Coalition then took the avowed and quite definite character of an alliance against France for the security of the Powers themselves.

The armies marched, Napoleon began the war, the 18th of

June ended it, and the Allies entered Paris. Without inverting all notions and arbitrarily shifting the meanings of words it is impossible to deny that France at that time was the enemy of the Allies and that the subjugated part was their conquest!... Whatever the opposite party may say, what was done in the three months of his usurpation was not the work of sheer violence. He opposed to the Allies not a handful of his partisans, but an army of nearly 200,000 men, drawn from almost the whole surface of France, and this army fought with courage and determination.

Neither the Treaty of March 25th, nor the Note of Adhesion of the French plenipotentiaries, nor the Declarations of March 13th and May 12th, contain any direct or distinct promise of the Powers not to infringe the integrity of France. They are limited to asserting the principle of maintenance of the Peace of Paris; and if the expressions of the 1st Article of the Treaty be attentively considered, which is the basis of all later Declarations, it will be seen that it contains rather a mutual engagement of the Allies not to allow the Treaty of Paris to be altered to their detriment than an engagement on their part not to alter it to the detriment of France.... But even if it should be interpreted so it remains indubitable that the conduct of France in taking arms against the Powers instead of availing herself of the help of the Powers to shake Napoleon off, has given them a full right to think of nothing beyond their own security.

Assuredly nothing is so wholesome and necessary as the endeavour to quiet France, to disarm passions and connect all interests with the preservation of respect for the law. But as sound policy must always keep mainly to what is wholly within its power, this problem must be subordinated to the other, namely, a restoration of a balance of powers suited to the circumstances; and nothing of what is truly essential to this object ought to be sacrificed to the other.... Attempts to make the Government agreeable to the people, to put it in a condition to deserve well of it, will not have any great success. The part of the people capable of estimating such desert is not the part which excites disturbances; and the part which is accustomed to be unruly can only be restrained by the power of a respected Government.

Hence the only way of really shielding Europe from new

dangers is a new distribution of the opposing Powers; and among the various methods of weakening France and strengthening her neighbours which can be applied, the simplest, the most logical, and the most adapted to the general plan of the Allies seems to be this, to give the contiguous states a safe frontier by transferring to them as a means of defence the fortresses which France so long as she has possessed them has used as means of aggression.

Cession of strong places and territories is a fate to which all states are liable; it is a painful wound, but it skins over and is at last forgotten. On the other hand, there is nothing so humiliating, especially for a nation which the memorial we have in view (Capodistrias') calls not without reason 'drunk with pride and self-love,' as the prolonged presence of foreign troops in its territory.... It is inevitable that the territory occupied should suffer considerably, and the inhabitants in consequence become extremely discontented. These complaints will be daily renewed and will infallibly be directed against the Government; it will be reproached not only with having purchased its return to France at the price of this arrangement, but also with being the cause of the prolongation of this state of things in order to obtain support for itself from the foreign power, and so will become infinitely more unpopular through this measure than through cessions of territory, which as immediate consequences of the war would be put down to Bonaparte's account.

It is in vain to argue that after paying large sums France will not be able to procure the necessary means of carrying on war. Prussia has shown whither on the contrary such treatment leads, and what a state can do even when it seems denuded of all resources.

In conformity with these views Hardenberg handed in on August 4th a Prussian Declaration, in which he declared it an unpardonable weakness to repeat the magnanimous forbearance with which France had been treated in 1814, and a positive duty to demand territory, 'since every Power is under solemn obligations to its people to give it a sure and durable Peace.' He argued as follows:

As soon as a nation has overpassed the defensive position assigned to it by nature or art, its activity, its power, its policy, its arrangements, its national spirit, its public opinion—all take the direction suggested by its geographical position, and it will retain this spirit so long as the geographical position remains. France has been in this condition since the time of Louis XIV.

Therefore if we want a durable and safe peace, as we have so often announced and declared, if France herself sincerely wants such a peace with her neighbours, she must give back to her neighbours the line of defence she has taken from them, to Germany, Alsace and the fortifications of the Netherlands, the Meuse, Mosel and Saar. Not till then will France find herself in her true line of defence, with the Vosges, and her double line of fortresses from the Meuse to the sea; and not till then will France remain quiet.

Let us not lose the moment so favourable to the weal both of Europe and France which now offers of establishing a durable and sure peace. At this moment we can do it. The hand of Providence has visibly offered us this opportunity. *If we let it slip streams of blood will flow to attain this object, and the cry of the unhappy victims will call us to give an account of our conduct.*

The same view was taken by the representatives of the smaller German States and of the Netherlands. Gagern, so devoted to the House of Nassau, zealously preached it, so did the Crown Prince of Bavaria, and the Crown Prince of Würtemberg, who had distinguished himself in the war, tried hard to convert his connexion, the Czar, to it.

In this case, it is to be remarked, the Powers group themselves in a novel manner. Russia and Prussia are opposed to each other; Prussia and Austria agree, and both agree with the Confederation of the Rhine; Russia and England side with France. Nevertheless it is not difficult to discover the law of this new combination. The Powers

which behave magnanimously towards France are precisely those whose frontier is not in question; the Powers which are threatened by her advanced line of fortresses are unanimous in thinking that she ought to be deprived of it.

It is time to inquire how Stein regarded this momentous question. For some unexplained reason his autobiography omits to speak of it, although he made a journey to Paris expressly with a view to influence the deliberations. Hardenberg, seeing the importance of winning the Czar, and remembering Stein's influence over the Czar, sent a pressing note on July 26th, begging him to come as soon as possible, for his presence was indispensably necessary. Capodistrias too, though he must have been assured that Stein's opinion would in this instance be strongly opposed to his own, yet invited him to come, and wrote, 'The Emperor recently asked if there were news of you; I said I had had none since Heidelberg, but that I counted upon prevailing on your Excellency to come and bring them yourself. "That," he answered, "would be a capital thing."' On August 10th Stein set out, and travelling through the Netherlands, arrived in Paris on the 14th.

An account is given us of his interview with Alexander, which I suppose Pertz to have received from Stein himself. It appears that the Czar assumed the offensive, and complained that Prussia and the other German Powers, particularly the King of Würtemberg, were staining their victory by violent proceedings in France and still more by exorbitant claims which were inconsistent with the

Vienna Declaration, and that they would drive the French to despair and deprive the Bourbons of the little reputation they had left. Stein's answer was, that he neither would defend excesses that might proceed from a relaxation of discipline, nor claims intended to give Germany an aggressive frontier, but that a strong defensive frontier was necessary, both for the protection of the Netherlands and of the Upper Rhine. The Restoration of the Bourbons was in itself no sufficient guarantee, since 'in the opinion of all sensible men a civil war would break out as soon as the armies were withdrawn.' The Czar in reply referred to the preference of the Alsatians for France, said observance of engagements was a better guarantee than fortresses, and begged Stein to read Capodistrias' paper. After a conference with Capodistrias, and after reading not only his paper but also that of the Duke of Wellington, Stein proceeded to write his own opinion.

He begins by quoting the Duke's candid admission that the Treaty of Paris leaves France 'in too great strength for the rest of Europe.' He then repeats the arguments which had been urged by Humboldt against the position that the Powers were precluded by their Declarations from infringing the integrity of the French territory, and the position that the restoration of the Bourbons was by itself a sufficient guarantee. He admits however that there are objections to the German, as well as to the English and Russian proposal. If the latter is open to the objections which Humboldt and Metternich had urged, the former, namely, a permanent occupation, if it is to meet both objects, and at once protect the

internal tranquillity of France and the repose of her neighbours, must receive a great extension, and that will give rise to all the bad consequences which result from breaking up a great extent of territory.

But he holds it possible to combine what is most essential in both schemes. There might be a temporary occupation of a sufficiently long line of fortresses, and in that case it might be sufficient to deprive France permanently of some six or seven important positions. The military history of Belgium and Germany indicates the Upper Meuse near Dinant, Namur, &c., and the Upper Rhine, as the weakest parts of this arena of war. Hence the defence of the Upper Meuse requires the cession of Maubeuge, Givet, Philippeville to Belgium, while the cession of a line from Thionville and Saarlouis to Strassburg would protect the Upper Rhine. He goes on in his historical way to refer to the negotiations of Gertruydenburg, when Louis XIV. had been willing to yield Lille and Strassburg. Then he adds: 'England might contribute much to sweeten the bitter pill to France by giving back some of the islands and possessions which she has obtained by the Peace of Paris, and everything is to be expected from the magnanimity of that great Power, and from its desire to facilitate the settlement.' As to the possibility that the French King might obstinately refuse to accept these conditions, he holds that it is not to be feared if only the King is persuaded of the unanimity of the Cabinets on this point, 'for there is not to be found either in the character of the people or of

its leaders, energy enough for a national war. It is to be wished that this unanimity may subsist, and that Russia and England may not imagine it to be their interest to keep Germany in a permanent condition of excitement and suffering.'

It is not necessary to linger on this subject, and it would lead us much too far to inquire into the motives which guided England and Russia. Stein remained in Paris till September 10th, when it was become evident that Prussia, by this time deserted by Austria, would be obliged to give way. Alexander resisted his arguments, and Capodistrias avowed that the interest of Russia in the eastern question required her to leave France strong. The influence of Stein upon Alexander had arisen out of conditions which had now altogether ceased to exist, out of the strong interest which Russia had had in 1813, when her great struggle with Napoleon remained to be decided, to tear Germany out of his hands and secure its resources for her own cause. Russia's interest was now quite altered; Alexander had gained confidence and experience, and he felt only personal regard for Stein, but no longer the need of his advice. Accordingly Stein's part in these negotiations was played out as soon as he had failed with Alexander, and he returned home long before the negotiations came to an end.

But in Prussian history these negotiations are memorable, and in 1870, when Hardenberg's solemn prophecy was so strikingly fulfilled, it appeared that Prussia had not forgotten his arguments, nor those of Humboldt and Stein.

Stein seems at this time in better favour with the Austrian Government than he had been during the War of Liberation. Perhaps his struggle at the Congress to revive the imperial dignity, and later his proposal to give Alsace and Lorraine to an Austrian Archduke, may have done this for him.

In May 1815 he received the Austrian Order of St Stephen, and at Heidelberg Metternich offered him the Presidency of the Federal Diet.

For a time too he expected a substantial reward for his services in the well-known estate of Johannisberg. In the distribution of territory reconquered from the French it was for a time contemplated to give Johannisberg along with the whole Principality of Fulda to the Duke of Weimar, and the Duke, apparently at Alexander's wish, had consented to bestow it on Stein. The matter was left in the hands of Hardenberg, to whom Stein had entrusted his interests, but unaccountably the territory was allowed to go to Austria, and Johannisberg itself, as we know, passed into the hands of Metternich. Stein was bitterly hurt by Hardenberg's conduct, and in this single case has allowed a private pique to find a place in his autobiography. In accounting for his estrangement from Hardenberg he says, without entering into further particulars, that Hardenberg 'entirely neglected at Vienna and Paris, either from jealousy or want of thought, in any case with great falseness, an affair I had entrusted to him and which he had undertaken with the strongest expressions of readiness.'

PART IX.

OLD AGE.

Das Neue dringt herein mit Macht, das Alte,
Das Würd'ge scheidet, andre Zeiten kommen,
Es lebt ein andersdenkendes Geschlecht!
Was thu' ich hier? Sie sind begraben alle,
Mit denen ich gewaltet und gelebt;
Unter der Erde schon liegt meine Zeit.

SCHILLER.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW PHASE OF GERMAN POLITICS.

We remarked that the Life and Times of Stein only began to form a single stream after the catastrophe of Prussia in 1806. We have now arrived at the point where they begin to separate again. Never again after his return from Paris in the autumn of 1815 did Stein control or influence in an important manner the affairs of Prussia, much less those of Germany or of Europe. He first ceases to control, and then gradually loses the hope of ever again controlling the current of the time. Our narrative therefore becomes at this point more summary than before, more so even than in the earlier part of the book, where public affairs had an interest for us because Stein was soon to take part in them, whereas now he grows ever more and more alien to them. Henceforth we can have but one object in tracing the course of politics—it is an object which may be sufficiently attained by a slight outline—namely, to show how Stein was again and

again hindered from returning to office, until at last he became reconciled to comparative retirement.

In the German world, now that peace is established, there visibly begins the new age. It differs from the age just closed the more widely as the convulsions which marked the transition were exceptionally violent. The struggle itself had not been long, but the feelings it had aroused, the ideas it had diffused, the desires it had instilled, were not to be appeased by the conclusion of treaties or the disbanding of armies. The uprising of the Germans had accomplished the object which the Germans had in view, and now it was to accomplish other objects which they had never had in view, the objects of Providence. Poets may imagine a great national victory followed by prosperity and repose, but the historian commonly finds such a triumph succeeded by an uneasy season of new wants and new grievances never felt before. We remember that those years were in England the most unhappy of our whole modern history; they had a complexion not dissimilar in Germany.

We have seen that the period of war which we have been contemplating so long was in Germany, but particularly in Prussia, an age of great reforms. Stein's Ministry had transformed the internal condition of Prussia, and the War of Liberation had created a new and grand military system, giving at the same time a great impetus to the growth of parliamentary institutions. But these reforms have throughout a peculiar character, which distinguishes them from the commencements of popular government in most other countries. They are not extorted

by the people rebelling against an oppressive Government or becoming intolerant of tutelage, but they are given by the Government itself, *proprio motu*, or more correctly they are actually forced on the people by a Government which wants more strength, and complains of the unreasonableness of being expected to govern alone. The object for which they are given is not directly the well-being or advancement of the people, but the expulsion of a foreign conqueror. Corresponding to this general character of the reform movement of Germany is the character of Stein as a statesman. Liberty, in the proper sense of the word, is not his primary, but only his secondary object; his primary object is national independence.

Through popular political writing and oratory there runs a perpetual confusion between two things so evidently distinct as liberty and independence. A Horatius keeping the bridge, and a Brutus expelling the tyrant, are described by the same epithets as patriots and as champions of liberty, though the one resisted a foreign invader, and the other resisted the established Government. The word patriot is strictly appropriate only to the former, who is the champion of independence, and it is only the latter who can be properly said to defend liberty, so that we might conveniently call him a libertarian. Now applying this distinction to the case of Stein, we may say that, as we have seen him hitherto, he is a patriot in the fullest and highest sense of the word, but not so decidedly a libertarian. No hero celebrated in romance was inflamed with a higher spirit of nationality, or a prouder resolve to break at all

hazards the yoke of the foreigner; but his feeling towards liberty was of quite another kind. We have always found him favourably disposed to it; but on the other hand he has been all his life an official and in the service of an absolute Government. It has been customary to speak of the regime of Frederick the Great as an extreme example of absolutism, and not without some justification, if we consider the brutal oppression that prevailed in the army. Stein was in Frederick's service for six years, and took part in administering the same sort of regime for twenty years after Frederick's time, yet I have not observed that he at any time discovered that there was anything harsh or oppressive in it. Though his language is always that of a humane man, yet he indulges in no outbreaks of indignation at the severities of the Government, there is no symptom of a belief lurking in his mind that the system is wicked or cruel. But it strikes him early that it is not a strong or an elastic system. He sees that on this system you cannot raise extraordinary taxes, even for the most necessary expenses, and he sees that local government might be carried on both better and more cheaply by calling in the aid of the people. This is clear to him even before the catastrophe of 1806, and when that catastrophe revealed the helplessness of the old despotic Government to all the world, he becomes at once a bold and thorough-going libertarian. But in the moment of his boldest innovations his opinion about liberty continues to be mainly this, that it increases the power of Government, and that in the absence of money and a

large standing army it may be made to supply their place. He recommends it as an incomparable weapon of war; how far he may be prepared to recommend it for itself is another question. Now what characterises the new age which definitively began in the autumn of 1815 was that the Prussian Government found itself in the condition of having given to its subjects much liberty and having promised more for a purpose which was now once for all fulfilled. Liberty had been created as a weapon of war, and the war was over. All those officials who had hitherto advocated free institutions found the controversial issue suddenly changed. Free institutions were now to be considered, not with reference to a state of war, but to a state of peace. It was not now the question whether they gave strength to a state, but whether they constituted in themselves a good form of government, whether it was advisable that the old despotism which had made Prussia great should give place, and that not in any extreme need, to a new and looser system, a system difficult to introduce and difficult to work. This was a question which might embarrass even the Reformers of the age before, and yet the promise had been made, and not only so, but the people had fairly won their enfranchisement in the battle-field. Here was a new entanglement, the plot of a quite new historical drama, which did not find its *dénouement* till 1848. After having taken the leading share during a time of war in strengthening the Prussian Government by making it more popular, Stein passes his old age in watching during a time of peace the struggles of the old rigid system

with the young and somewhat crude Liberalism which he has himself helped to create.

There have passed before us two periods, in the former of which there has been in Prussia actually no public opinion about politics, and in the latter a public opinion which the Government has created, which reinforces the Government in its struggle both with the foreign enemy and with the traitor within the camp, the French party of Berlin, and which only opposes the Government so far as it occasionally outruns it. A third period now begins, in which public opinion instead of supporting the Government gradually becomes estranged from it, and at last bitterly disaffected, so that that revolutionary discord, that habit of discontent which had hitherto been foreign to Prussia, at last gains head in this country also, and Prussian Liberalism begins to assume something of the colour of French. Of this period Stein witnesses the commencement. Having spent his life in struggling with a French Revolution which made constant war upon Germany, he lives just long enough to see another French Revolution, which is hailed in Germany with sympathetic movements and convulsions of instinctive imitation.

Such in general is the new phase through which Prussia passes. Meanwhile Austria continues in the course upon which she entered after her failure of 1809, and becomes the head of reaction both in Europe and Germany. Both the new federal arrangements and the reactionary disposition of Governments at this time give her an ascendant influence in Germany at large and over her rival Prussia.

The third great division of Germany, which we have hitherto known as the Confederation of the Rhine, in its desire to maintain its distinct interest against Austria and Prussia, unable any longer to lean on France, falls back upon the principles of Liberalism. It is a striking difference between this period and the last, that whereas then Prussia took the lead, first in intelligent reform and afterwards in active heroism, while the Rhine Confederation, more particularly the States of the South-West, were devoted to Napoleon against Germany and to Napoleonic despotism against liberty, in the new period the contrast is reversed, and stagnation along with subservience to Metternich gains ground in Prussia, while in the South-West a constant liberal agitation goes on, and from the South-West comes whatever opposition Metternich meets with in the Diet.

The period is not marked by many striking incidents, but the principal landmarks for the student are as follows:

In 1819 the reactionary tendencies gather head in consequence of the murder of Kotzebue by Sand, and the crusade of the German Governments against democracy begins. The new German Confederation, which had proved useless for any good purpose, shows itself vigorous in persecuting the universities and the press. The Carlsbad Resolutions and the Vienna Conferences of this year determined for a long time the course of German politics.

In 1822 some relief to the intensity of reaction in Europe is caused by the death of Lord Castlereagh, and the marked secession of England from what is loosely called the Holy Alliance. The same

year is made still more important for Germany by being the date of the death of Hardenberg.

Between 1822 and 1830, the date of the Revolution of July, and of the evident revival of the spirit of change and innovation, there is no occurrence which greatly roused public attention in Germany, though the first steps towards the formation of the Zollverein, taken in 1828, would have done so had the public been able at the moment to appreciate their importance.

Lastly, the Revolution of 1830 gives rise to new disturbances in Germany. These disturbances, however, affected neither Austria nor Prussia nor the South-West, but had the effect of introducing representative government into those smaller states of North Germany out of which the Kingdom of Westphalia had been composed.

In this final stage of Stein's Life, as we shall have to tell of few achievements and few very important occurrences, we shall welcome all the more such personal sketches of him and his conversation as may remain. One such, thanks to Arndt, meets us at the very threshold. It does indeed properly belong to a period which we have left behind, for what we are about to relate happened in the summer of 1815, and before Stein's second journey to Paris. Arndt had now gone to Cologne to be Editor of a journal called the Watchman, the object of which was to revive a German spirit in those Rhenish districts which had for so many years been in the possession of the French. One morning comes to him a messenger from Stein, bidding him come to the Cathedral, where Stein will be found. He goes

at once with Eichhorn, who had called about the same time;—

Stein greeted us in the most friendly manner, and whom saw we standing not far from him? There stood the *other* greatest German of the nineteenth century, Wolfgang Goethe, examining the Cathedral. And Stein said to us, 'Hush, children, hush! no politics! he cannot abide it. We cannot of course go with him in this; still think how great he is!' It was strange to see the two great Germans behaving towards each other as with a certain mutual reverenee; and so it was in the hotel also at the tea table, where Goethe was for the most part very silent, and retired early.

But how had they met and what had brought them together to Cologne? Goethe had paid a visit to his native town, and to some old acquaintances and friends. There his heart had prompted him and he again had taken heart to wander once more along the ways which had witnessed the course and the riot of his free and poetic youth, the ways which from Wetzlar wind along the Lahn, and through its romantic valleys of Nassau, Coblenz, Ehrenbreitstein and Valendar. To Stein in his mansion comes word, Goethe has taken quarters in Nassau at the Lion. He goes at once to the Lion and invites and forces him in spite of resistance to come into the mansion. And as Goethe had intended an excursion to Cologne, Stein orders his carriage and together they drive down the Rhine to Cologne. I can fancy how the two companions studied to avoid a collision; indeed it was the old Aesop's story of the stone pot and the earthen pot. And in Cologne too they moved side by side with a delicate *Noli me tangere.* Never have I heard Stein's speech sound more subdued in society.

Arndt goes on to make some reflexions on Goethe's appearance and bearing which, though full of admiration, have just that touch of coldness which might be expected from the singer of the 'German Fatherland,' observing the quietist Goethe a month after the battle of Waterloo. 'His figure was not perfect; his legs were too short, and this gave a stiffness to his whole bearing, so that he could never have been the graceful skater he is said to have

been. He was hat-in-hand to every young Prussian officer who might be the son of a Baron or a Minister, &c.' But Arndt, as we have found him doing before, describes what he passingly saw without fully understanding it. Stein and Goethe did not on this occasion meet as purely antipathetic natures in temporary truce. No doubt there was a sharp contrast between the two men which they could not but be well aware of themselves, the one living in patriotism, action and history, the other in cosmopolitan science and political indifference. But it so happens that just when Arndt saw them together they had found a point of sympathy; the Cathedral at Cologne interested Goethe as belonging to art, and Stein as belonging to national history. Goethe has twice mentioned this visit to it 'in the company, which did me honour, of the Minister of State vom Stein' (*Annalen oder Tag- und Jahres-Hefte*) and any one who inquires what thoughts were passing through his mind at the moment when Arndt's eye fell on him may learn it in full from a paper entitled *Von Deutscher Baukunst*, 1823. But from the correspondence of Sulpiz Boisserée, the great admirer of Cologne Cathedral and of ancient German art in general, we learn more. We learn that after the excursion (Tuesday, July 25th) Goethe returned with Stein to Nassau and spent the following Sunday there. Thence he went to Wiesbaden, where Boisserée then was; and on August 2, just when Stein was determining to start for Paris, Boisserée makes the following note:

Visited Goethe at noon and had a cheerful, cordial reception. Stein had asked him to write a Memoir to Hardenberg on art

and antiquarian affairs; he wanted to ask my advice about it. He quite agreed that it must be done directly and without any mention of Stein's suggestion, in order to avoid the party feeling of the moment. I explained to him how favourably he was regarded by Hardenberg.

And again three days later:

Stein said that he had put Goethe upon laying a Memoir before Hardenberg, and I said that I could furnish material for it, having had the thing in my head for years, but that the time had never come, and besides I could refer to no authority, but that Goethe now supplied this want excellently, and that for this we had to thank him, Stein. He was much pleased, and hoped that something good would come out of it. Then he asked when the book about the Cathedral was to appear. I said that all depended upon an arrangement with Cotta.

This is the first symptom of the new relation to art and letters into which Stein entered in his later days. Hitherto we have found him little concerned with either. The strong turn of his mind towards affairs of government has hitherto diverted him from the pursuits which absorbed most of his contemporaries, to which was added, in regard to the philosophical systems which then chased each other with such bewildering speed through the German universities, a positive repugnance and sincere disapproval on public grounds of such a rage for speculation. As to poetry and art he seems to have had as much pleasure in them as most people, and the 'want of aesthetic culture' of which Schön accuses him amounts simply to this, that he did not follow his generation in attaching to poetry an importance such as was never seriously assigned to it in any other place or time. Great affairs and great responsibilities

made him in this respect unlike his contemporaries, but he as well as others could enjoy a fine poem or a noble building. And now that perhaps the feeling of repose, of a goal reached, of leisure earned, was stealing over him, this began to appear. But his sense of art was roused by his patriotism. Cologne, with its great German Cathedral, was recovered out of French hands. At such a moment Stein could heartily admire its beauties, could for a moment dwell on them with more love than even Goethe, and could study how to make use of Goethe's artistic reputation, as in 1808 he had made use of the philosophic influence of Fichte. It seems that the object in view was to secure for Prussia Boisserée's collection of old German works of art, but a very reasonable parsimony at this moment reigned in Prussian finance, and the collection went, as is well known, to Munich.

Later in this year we find him appealed to for a moment in the constitutional dispute which had begun to rage in the Kingdom of Würtemberg. For here began the agitation which since then has spread over Germany and has never ceased. In this very peculiar nook of Germany, which may be called the German Scotland, among those Suabians who, like the Scotch, have their marked dialect, and combine so effectively shrewdness and romance, powerful religious feeling and resolute freethinking, in the land of the old Minnesänger, and of Schiller and Uhland, in the land of Hegel and Strauss, and of the redoubted 'Würtemberg pietism,' in this land the movement began. Some rumour of it has gone out to Europe in Uhland's political songs. It had

the peculiarity that the King, 'the monster of pride' spoken of by Stein above, offered a Constitution in some respects really adapted to the time, and was encountered by the Estates with the most tenacious opposition in the name of the old institutions of the country ('das alte gute Recht'), a medieval constitution in which some valuable franchises were mixed with much that was wrongful and more that was obsolete. Here the very same reproaches were hurled by the people against the Government which everywhere else in Germany were directed by the Government against the people; the King and his Ministers were charged with 'a tendency to innovation, to a confusion of all ideas, to revolution and to radical alterations in law and government.' The King seems to have shown greater moderation and judgment than might have been expected from earlier specimens of his character, and Stein took the opportunity of encouraging him in his new course. Receiving information of it from Cotta, a leading politician of Würtemberg, he wrote (Nov. 17th):

> I congratulate you heartily on the happy occurrences you are so good as to relate to me; it was to be expected that a ruler with your King's intelligence and strength of will would accomplish the task he undertook in the spring, of giving a Constitution to the kingdom, in such a manner as to ensure to it stability and duration.

A striking contrast to his exclamation, but a year and a half before, about the same King, 'Oh! this fellow will certainly meet with a fate suitable to his life!' The generous tone he now took caught the attention of a politician who had lately stepped forward to mediate between the King and his Estates,

one of the most considerable names of the somewhat obscure period of German history which was just commencing, Karl August v. Wangenheim. He writes to Cotta:

I thank you heartily for letting me see the letter which the *German* Stein has written to you about our affairs. There breathes in it such an honest, and at the same time, encouraging recognition of the great merit that lies in any victory of the better self over the wild beast in a man, that I thought I could not do better than avail myself of your permission to lay the letter before the King.

But this plain-spoken Minister is not disposed to trust too much to his Majesty's amendment.

As surely as I have hitherto kept the King in an honestly good temper, so surely will he give me the slip as soon as the behaviour of the Estates gives him a pretext. *L'ours n'est pas encore mort.* He has already accustomed himself to the notion of putting off the assembly till the Act of Confederation is settled, and then granting no more than that requires.

Wangenheim hopes nothing from the Confederation; 'since even Stein has had to retire from the business, how can we look any longer for any good from that quarter?' But he considers the Estates, and particularly the noblesse, who were headed by a certain Count Waldeck, to be quite as dangerous in their way as the King:

These young gentlemen have no conception of the State or of their relation to it. They want to combine incompatibilities. They want to be daring and overwhelming like Mirabeau, but at the same time they want to retain the prejudices and privileges which he had renounced. It is pitiable how low these people have sunk! It would do a world of good if Minister Stein would bring Count Waldeck and the rest of the high noblesse as much

as possible to their senses. I would ask him myself if he had ever condescended to answer my letters.

We are allowed only a glimpse into these affairs. Stein wrote to Count Waldeck, who however did not allow himself to be influenced, and even affected to question the genuineness of the letter. The dispute in Würtemberg continued its course until in October, 1816, King Frederick died suddenly, and was succeeded by his son William, who had distinguished himself as a general in the war with France, and who now became at once one of the most considerable of the crowned heads of Germany.

One of the most important of 'negative events,' to use Ranke's convenient phrase, happened at this time in the life of Stein. His position throughout the war had been so high and great, that no post in Germany was beyond his pretensions, and though at times he speaks of the need of rest, yet I think it is clear that he would have been glad to find a new office. He confesses as much when he says that after the Peace he had to accustom himself to two discomforts, *want of occupation* and old age; his friend Gagern remarks that it was official work that he missed. It is therefore an interesting question why at this moment he retired—finally, as it proved—from the scene of public affairs. Was it by his own will, or by the jealousy of others, or through the difficulty of finding an office suited for him?

We may say in one word that the cause of his retirement was the same as in 1808, viz. that the moment did not suit his genius, that he was made for powerful action, and that the time now commencing was one of inaction or else of reaction.

It is probable that Kings and Emperors did not greatly wish to see him at work again, and that he on his part knew that if he took office under them it would only be to be thwarted and studiously discredited. But these were the secret not the ostensible causes of his retirement. He could not complain that posts worthy of his high claims were not offered to him. There was one post in particular to which he had a sort of right. The new German Confederation had indeed properly no President, no one who even for a limited time answered to the Emperor in the Empire now dissolved, but the Diet of the new Confederation had a President or Chairman, whose functions were by no means purely formal. He had a casting vote in cases of equal division in the Smaller Federal Council, the right of opening and inspecting beforehand all papers to be submitted to the Diet, oversight of the Protocols, Registration and Treasury of the Diet, the appointment of several functionaries, the representation of the Confederation in public acts and before foreign Powers, &c. Now who could be thought of to fill such a post but the man who had played the part of German Emperor in 1813 and 1814?

As a kind of reminiscence of the old position of Austria in Germany it was allowed to her that her representative in the Diet should hold this position. Accordingly in decrees of the Diet the formula is used, The Germanic Confederation and in its name the Minister of Austria, President of the Diet. We have observed how completely Stein's connexion with Prussia had been severed in the War of Liberation; now, this having once happened, he was in

some respects particularly well qualified to represent Austria at the Diet. For Austria had been much in the habit of looking for officials to the Imperial Knighthood, Stein's brother had distinguished himself in the service of the Emperor Joseph, his brother-in-law was now a trusted Austrian general, he himself had been originally intended for the imperial service, and had recently appeared as an advocate of the revival of the imperial dignity. On the other hand Stein had been the principal opponent of the Austrian policy, and in 1813 he stood out as the best representative of the party against which Metternich waged war. There was indeed a sort of antipathy between the two men, as we may learn from a letter which Metternich wrote in 1833 to Gagern, on receiving a copy of that volume of Gagern's autobiography which contains his correspondence with Stein. He writes:

I am sorry you inserted the Baron vom Stein's outpourings about me, my character and political course. No one honours truth more than I do, and history, ought it to be anything but truth? Your friend hated me; that followed from his character; he belonged to the class of people who are properly described by the English word *impressionable*. I never hated the Baron vom Stein, for love and hatred of individuals are weaknesses which exert no influence on my conduct of business, and my relations to the deceased were purely those of business. No doubt we found it difficult there to act together, for even when our objects were not incompatible with each other our means were often so. No one honoured more than I the distinguished gifts both of heart and mind of the Baron vom Stein. I doubt much if he ever formed more than a passing opinion about my character. If he ever did think me worth the trouble of an inquiry what I and my views might be, an inquiry which I regard as a duty wherever I think it will repay the trouble, then he misunderstood me and looked for me where I am not to be found.

It was often Metternich's fortune to be thus misunderstood, and he enjoyed posing in the character of a statesman whose high serenity could not be appreciated by those who were themselves slaves of passion. But we should certainly not expect that he would wish to see Stein of all persons presiding in the Diet. And yet he overcame any such reluctance, perhaps in the confidence that not even Stein's energy could accomplish anything at the head of such a helpless confederation, and that the best way of muzzling him was to take him into the Austrian service. He offered him the Presidency of the Diet as early as June at Heidelberg, and he renewed the offer near the end of the year, when Stein, apparently in order to watch the first proceedings of the Diet, had settled for a time at Frankfurt. Stein declined the proposal both times because, so he tells us, 'it seemed to him unbecoming to pass out of the service of one state into that of another, which, through its own pretensions to supremacy, stood in a perpetual, more or less hostile opposition to the former.' 'I could not,' he adds, 'suddenly alter my views and political opinions which had been formed in 40 years, and I should have been exposed to the charge of tergiversation and ingratitude from my old friends, of lukewarmness and attachment to my accustomed routine from my new ones.' Assuredly the explanation is most sufficient. No conclusion to Stein's career could well have been more melancholy than that he should take a conspicuous share in the proceedings of a body which was found helpless for all good purposes, but showed an unexpected energy in persecuting free thought

and free speech, and that he should appear in that body as the representative of the most reactionary of all German States.

About the same time Hardenberg offered him the post of representative of Prussia in the Diet. This too Stein declined, 'on account,' as he says, 'of my repugnance to put myself into a position of dependence on a man for whom I had so little respect as the Chancellor of State, of whom I foresaw that he would sacrifice me at any moment or on any pretext, and who had just at that time at Vienna and Paris completely neglected an affair which I had committed to him and which he had undertaken with the greatest assurances of readiness, either out of jealousy or want of thought, but in any case with great falseness.' This was the impression on Stein's memory when he wrote this part of his autobiography (1824). It may perhaps be doubted whether in 1815 he really felt quite so much bitterness towards Hardenberg, or was influenced so exclusively by that feeling. When the matter was fresh he gave the following account of it in a letter to Duke Franz of Anhalt-Dessau, dated December 7th, 1815:

The German Confederation is such an imperfect political institution, the possibility of arriving at any rational or decisive resolution on any subject so remote on account of the views of many of our leading Princes, and the faultiness of the Constitution itself, that assuredly no friend of his country could desire to be deputed to the Diet. Nevertheless I was ready to accept the appointment under a condition which would in some degree secure me my freedom, that is, that I should have a colleague; this would have allowed me to absent myself as often and as long as my personal circumstances demanded. A difficulty was

made about granting this condition, and thus I thought myself entitled after thirty years service to indulge my wish for retirement into private life, the more so as the Prussian State does not want competent and honest men who may be deputed to the Diet[1].

This account too ought perhaps not to be taken quite literally, but at least it lays stress upon the fact that the position offered to Stein was not in the least one which could tempt him. It had the appearance of being honourable, yet it was a post in which it was pretty certain that he could achieve nothing, and probably Stein may have suspected that it was precisely as such a post that it was offered to him.

Let us consider what position in Prussia Stein might have reasonably wished for, and in a manner claimed. He had begun the great work of internal reform and of resistance to Napoleon. Now that Napoleon had fallen and Prussia had risen higher than ever, his work had received the sanction of time and could not but seem far greater than when it was possible to regard it as a mad struggle against overwhelming power. Yet for this work he had been rewarded only by exile and loss of property. In the recent war he had shown undiminished energy, and had taken a very splendid position through the confidence which the Czar had reposed in him. The Peace in restoring Prussia to more than its old greatness had set a new task of reorganisation before its Government. New territories

[1] It appears that he made the additional condition that the colleague should be a person in whom he had confidence, and he mentioned the name of Rhediger.

taken from nine different States (France, Sweden, Warsaw, Saxony, Westphalia, Berg, Danzig, Darmstadt, and Nassau) were now to be welded together with the old territories of the Monarchy. 'The foreign spirit was to be combated in the interior, and the spirit of the Small State within the Great State[1],' Catholic populations were to be reconciled to a Protestant Government. At the same time the new military system needed to be, as it were, codified, and—more important than all—the promise of parliamentary institutions was to be redeemed. Here was a crisis not less great than that to deal with which Stein had been summoned from Nassau in 1807. A transition was to be made which called for a statesman of comprehensive views and, if possible, also of commanding reputation. Was not Stein just the man to deal with it? Was it not exceptionally fortunate for Prussia that such a man was at hand at the moment, his reputation at its height and his vigour not yet diminished?

To this man at this moment the offer of a diplomatic post where it was almost certain that nothing could be achieved may well have seemed little better than an insult, and perhaps malignant as well as insulting, for it not only conferred upon him no real power, but at the same time it sent him out of the country where even without power he might have exerted a commanding influence. What may have been the real motive that determined the offer? This we can only conjecture.

Hardenberg might well be excused for not choosing to give place to Stein; he might without

[1] The expression is Treitschke's.

extravagant vanity think that his services had been as great, and having steered the State through its tempests he might refuse to quit the helm now that fair weather was come. But could he not divide his power with Stein? Might not the two statesmen resume the old friendly relation in which they had stood to one another during the war of 1806, and Hardenberg return to his original portfolio of Foreign Affairs, allowing Stein to preside over the work of internal re-organisation? It is very possible that such an arrangement, which occurs readily to a reader, might have seemed to those most closely concerned utterly out of the question. We saw in the early part of 1807 how impracticable it was found to make a harmonious Government out of equal Heads of Departments. A dictatorship had been found necessary, and in 1810 it had even been thought advisable to give it a formal character by creating the office of Chancellor of State. We can easily believe that two men, both so great and one so irritable as Hardenberg and Stein, could not now have pulled together as they did in 1806. But we are to remember that the decision did not rest with Hardenberg alone.

The King had endured Stein, and even to a certain extent seemed to grow attached to him in 1808. But those were times of trial. Now he was naturally looking forward to repose, and to send for Stein was at no time the readiest way to procure that. Moreover, we are to remember what offence Stein had given by his audacious proceedings at Königsberg in 1813.

But apart both from Hardenberg and from the

King there were already signs of the approach of an intense reaction in Prussia. The French party of Berlin, which might be thought to have been crushed by the course and issue of the war, soon began to be more influential than ever. The King soon began to lean to them and Hardenberg to be carried away by their ascendancy. Thus we can discern three distinct influences which may have operated to keep Stein at a distance, but in what proportions they operated, or which was the decisive influence, I cannot discover. Stein himself however seems always to have ascribed the result to Hardenberg's jealousy. As late as 1829 I find him telling the story thus to Gneisenau:

> When I returned from Russia in 1813, H. v. Hardenberg was at the head of affairs; he had ability and ready apprehension, but his pride, his immorality, his spirit of intrigue sought only subalterns and tools, not independent colleagues with ideas of their own; he surrounded himself with people of the former kind and repelled whatever threatened him with opposition or difference of opinion. Hence I too was not only not asked whether I wished to return into the service from which I had been expelled by a foreign Power, but all through the years 1813—1815, while I resided at the Russian Head-quarters or at the place of meeting of the Cabinets, there was a careful reticence about all things and persons which concerned the internal Departments. Then in 1814 the new Ministry completely subordinate to H. v. Hardenberg was formed, and later, in the autumn of 1815, the post of Representative at the Diet was offered to me.

But as Stein's opinion of Hardenberg was probably in his later years unjustly severe, it perhaps deserves consideration whether Hardenberg's dislike of equal colleagues did not spring from an honest conviction that the more monarchical form of administration was preferable.

Honours meanwhile which carried no consequences the Prussian Government did not refuse to Stein. At a great festival in honour of the Peace and of the Orders of Knighthood, which was held at Berlin on January 17th and 18th, 1816, and at which new Knights of the great Prussian Orders were created, the absent Baron vom Stein was named first and alone as created Knight of the Order of the Black Eagle. After him, as receiving the Red Eagle, appeared Beyme, Grolmann, Schön, Vincke and others. The *insignia* were sent to Stein, then residing at Frankfurt, with a letter from the King himself and another from Hardenberg. Stein perhaps shook his head when he read in the latter 'how much the writer had wished to be able to connect him with Prussia by another sort of tie,' but he wrote a grateful answer, in which he said that 'the tie which bound him most closely to the Prussian State and its honoured Ruler was the views and feelings which had sprung up in an official service of 30 years, and the conviction that the preservation of the German Fatherland is inseparable from the well-being of the Prussian State, and the wisdom and stability of its constitution.' The faithful old Scheffner who, as we remember, had been the first to welcome Stein to his dictatorship in 1807, and had begged for him the very honour at his retirement in 1808 now bestowed on him, was still living to congratulate him on the 'just recognition of his great, great, great services,' and to send him the papers which proved that the first suggestion had been his.

And thus began for Stein the first period he had

ever known of prosperous leisure. He threw himself into the rearrangement of his private affairs. His estate of Birnbaum, which perhaps while he looked forward to living much at Berlin seemed not inconveniently situated, now appeared to him too distant. He desired a position which might not be too remote from Nassau, and at the same time might enable him to keep up his connexion with Prussia. He had no taste for town-life. His racy political eloquence, which his friends valued, did not give himself such pleasure that he ever sought a scene for displaying it. He loved solitude and looked back with special fondness to that time in his life when he had 'tasted the delight of solitude in a beautiful country.' This happiness he had enjoyed in Westphalia, the scene of his noviciate in statesmanship, where he had made his first essays in Reform. And now he saw his way to become a Westphalian. Through his friend Kunth he heard of an estate called Cappenberg on the Lippe not very far from that County Mark which he had once known so well. It had an old mansion conspicuously placed upon a hill above the river. There had once been Counts of Cappenberg, from whom the land had passed into ecclesiastical hands, and now in consequence of one of the numerous secularisations which the age had witnessed it belonged to the royal domain. This estate Stein succeeded by the King's permission, granted June 21st, 1816, in procuring as an exchange for Birnbaum. In the autumn of that year he was engaged in taking possession. The large mansion was in a ruinous state, the condition of the woods admitted of much

improvement, and all improvement was fettered by the complicated rights arising out of those commonalties of which he had heard so much in his public life. For a year or two he had perhaps no more serious occupation than the care of his estate, and he passed much time with his forester in perambulating —it seems he was a capital walker—the woods which had become his own. As in Cavour, Bismarck, and so many English politicians, we see in Stein an example of the sort of connexion that exists between statesmanship and land-ownership.

He amused himself at the same time with the tower which he was adding to his house at Nassau, and by which he intended to commemorate the War of Liberation. His visitors at Nassau were taken to see this building while it was in progress, and the bookseller Perthes of Hamburg made him laugh good-humouredly by calling it a Zwing-Uri. When it was finished he furnished it with portraits and busts and with a small select library of German history. The tower still stands there. Such memorial structures seldom satisfy the critical and half-informed tourist; but Stein seems to have enjoyed the gratification of his fancy and to have taken real pleasure in his plaything when it was finished. It had a room in which he sat often, as Arndt remembered, who writes thus long after his death (1842):

I have just come from the tower of the old chivalrous Imperial Baron. There I saw, in the same place where it hung half a generation ago, the portrait of Scharnhorst; it reminded me affectingly how the old man, when he showed this *sanctum* of his to his friends, always pointed to this picture first. More than once has this happened to me, though he knew that I had known

the great man in life. He would himself generally stand for a while as if in devotion before this picture, and gaze at it with an impressive solemnity. There you saw the son of the German Imperial Knight, standing in fit posture of respect before the son of the German peasant. Often the venerable old man sat in these rooms in his hours of solitude. Here he would receive and write letters, and at times take an old volume from his smaller library which stood behind him, when in some matter of the national history he wanted a list of names, perhaps to prove something to a friend or to refresh his own memory. This small tower-library was his Selecta containing the rare books on German History, Collections, Original Documents, &c.

The reader will see that large public feeling and no mere personal pride suggested this monument, and that the conception of it was part of a great plan in which Stein took the lead of all his contemporaries, that of arousing a distinctively German patriotism. But what is this which Arndt tells us about national history? We have known Stein as a reader of history, but not hitherto as an actual antiquarian student of it, living among historical collections and documents. For a full explanation of this the reader must be pleased to wait a little.

These first years of the Peace were perhaps the happiest that Stein knew after his youth. Complete triumph and restoration both for himself, for his adopted country Prussia, and for the country of his heart Germany, this would have been enough for most men, who when ambition is satisfied desire repose. Stein no doubt would have felt happier with the care of a kingdom upon his shoulders, but as it was those who saw him about this time were struck with his brightness, cheerfulness and happy faith in Providence. Among these was Perthes,

the well-known bookseller of Hamburg, who in the course of a journey which he took in 1816 in order to examine the state of the bookselling trade in the South, and push his plan of a copyright which should run through the whole of Germany, visited him at the beginning of August.

He received me very cordially as an old acquaintance, from our meeting in December 1813, and gave the word of command to sit down. 'You are for Vienna; what do you want there, and what do you want with me?' With Stein, if you do not know distinctly what you mean, you will certainly find yourself very speedily out of doors again. I explained my views in few words; he entered into the matter at once with intelligence and interest.

Then he asked after the Senate of Hamburg, and hoped it had gained some new blood since he knew it. Then he talked of the progress the Prussian administration made in its new Rhine Province, taking a cheerful view of the matter. 'Not but what both in and out of Prussia plenty of follies were still committed, but so it has always been and always will be in the world. Yet in Frankfurt too you will see that good is preparing for Germany, and that is fortunate for Europe, for the old champions of freedom, the English, will hardly continue to be so much longer.' (Those were the Castlereagh days.) Then they went to see the tower, as mentioned above, and when Stein shook Perthes' hand, 'I left him,' says Perthes, 'gladdened to see a man who, after such great experiences, is still so open to all impressions, and looks forward with such high courage to the future, although he missed his aim so often and so often

had to sacrifice the good he wanted to a Prince's will or a majority in the Council of Statesmen.'

This sanguine cheerfulness was to be clouded, before many years had passed, by the disappointing turn which German politics took, as well as by the advance of old age. Meanwhile he must have been cheered by the bustle of fresh political life which went on all around him, and which from his connexions and reputation affected him more than most people. One little constitutional struggle raged in Nassau close to his doors; he heard of another from his sister who lived in Hessen-Cassel; his frequent visits about this time to Frankfurt brought a third, which convulsed the Imperial City, under his notice; we have already seen him closely watching a fourth, that of Würtemberg; a fifth in Baden interested him also. Meanwhile the new Federal Constitution was getting under way at Frankfurt—I suppose it was on this account that he visited that town so often—and of course Prussian politics came home to him more than those of any other German State. I shall not try to entice the reader into this intricate maze. It will be enough for us to watch the course of the greater States, of the Confederation and Austria and especially Prussia. Let us look first at Prussia.

A Parliament, besides making government popular, has an indirect operation which is seldom remarked. By bringing together into one society, during the session, the most considerable persons from all parts of the country, it destroys local or provincial parties. In Prussia, before there was a Parliament, we find that the parties are provincial.

Already we have seen traces of this. Stein's Westphalian notions were dreaded at Berlin when he first became Minister, and in Schön we have seen the intense East-Prussian fanaticism. We have observed that the French party during the war has been in like manner local; it has appeared always as the party of Berlin. Much therefore has always depended upon the King's place of residence for the time. At Memel and Königsberg he was a Reformer, but it had been feared in 1808 that he would cease to be so on his return to Berlin. Affairs now actually enter into a new phase through the ascendancy of the party which having its headquarters at Berlin is properly the party of the Brandenburg noblesse.

We remember their struggle with Hardenberg in 1812. At that time Stein had characterised them with his usual emphasis:

> What can you expect from the inhabitants of those sandy steppes, those smart, heartless, wooden, half-educated people, cut out for nothing but corporals and calculators...conceited egoistic sciolists, fellows that think only of places, privileges, increased salaries?

And again in a passage which marks curiously both the strongly local character of the Prussian parties of that time, and Stein's almost Wordsworthian estimate of the effect of scenery on character.

> It is a misfortune for the Prussian State that the capital is situated in the Electoral Mark. What impression can those dry flats make on the minds of their inhabitants? what power can they have to rouse or exalt or cheer it? what do they tell of? Scanty subsistence, joyless brooding over the impotent ground, limited means, petty ends! Do not talk to me of Frederick the

Great; the Hohenzollerns are Suabians; their race has been propagated through women of foreign extraction, and what have the horse-races of the Neustadt to do with the thick-headed miserable country horses of the Mark? What can these conceited selfish sciolists do but dress up and whitewash their vulgar notions and proceedings in metaphysical verbiage?

This party during the war had appeared as at once the French party and the Conservative party. It is a striking difference between Prussia and England in that age, that whereas here opposition to France went along with Conservatism, in Prussia it was closely connected with Reform. The same party which so bitterly resisted Stein's scheme of insurrection opposed also his Emancipating Edict and his Town Ordinance. After the Peace of course we hear no more of their French policy. Of this nothing remains but a bitter feeling of enmity to those who had taken the lead in the War of Liberation. They are now simply a party of reaction against the reforms of Stein and Hardenberg and against the spirit which those reforms have called into existence. They are dangerous, partly because the King lives amongst them, but partly also because the last turn of affairs had favoured them. The return of peace naturally arrested a popular policy which only war had made necessary, and which was equally in conflict with the tradition of Frederick the Great and with the tenor of Frederick William's earlier and more prosperous years. It was to be expected from his character that he would fall into the hands of a reactionary party as soon as the pressure of difficulty was removed; his tenacious grasp of absolute power, confirmed now by

the splendid fortune *quae sera tamen respexit inertem*, could not but lead to a certain jealousy of great ability and preference for courtier-statesmen.

In 1812 Hardenberg had been obliged to take some leading members of the French party, Wittgenstein, Bülow and Hatzfeld, into his Ministry. Wittgenstein was now Minister of Police, and was destined to play the same part in the second half of Frederick William's reign, which in the first had fallen at different times to Haugwitz, Kalkreuth, and Nagler. The bitterness his new ascendancy excited, coming right across the fresh enthusiasm of victory, makes him the Bute of Prussian history. While the second Treaty of Paris was being negotiated the apple of discord had been thrown among the Prussians by a small pamphlet, On Political Societies, of which the author was a well-known Berlin jurist, Theodor Schmalz, brother-in-law to Scharnhorst. It contained a criticism of an account of the Tugendbund which occurred in a Chronicle for the year 1808 by Venturini, and in addition some remarks, from which the following is a selection:

The Bund itself was afterwards abolished by authority. But other leagues soon afterwards formed themselves, unperceived perhaps, out of the fragments of it, and of the others above-mentioned. They deserve praise if their object is liberation of the country from foreign oppression, execration if they aim at influencing us at home without the King's consent. But the existence of such leagues spreads alarm among the citizens of all German countries, and fills the loyal citizen of the Prussian state with disgust. From such leagues come the vulgar attacks upon other Governments, and the senseless declamations about the union of all Germany under a single Government (in a representative system as they call it); a union contrary to the uniform tendency

of the genius of all German peoples, in behalf of which however devotion to these separate dynasties is now to be suppressed in every German breast by mockery and mutiny. They corrupt the most sacred principles of morality by teaching us to transgress impiously substantial and definite duties in favour of imaginary, more general, and so, as they make out, higher duties. As the Jacobins used to put forward humanity, they put forward Germanism, to make us forget the oath by which each of us is bound to his Prince... Yet Germany has no need to be afraid of them....No doubt they boast most audaciously of what they, the members of the Leagues, accomplished in 1813 in rousing the Prussian nation to enthusiasm, whence a dread might arise that they would be able to rouse both Prussia and the rest of Germany for these objects also. But the simple fact is, that they say most audaciously what is not true when they boast of having roused the Prussian nation. There was no trace among us in 1813 of such enthusiasm, nor of any enthusiasm roused by them. The fact was as follows. The people felt bitterly the oppression of their country, but it awaited in quiet strength the King's signal. When in 1812 the alliance with France was concluded, which saved us and through us all Europe, these people poured out outcries, declamations and threats, and made all sorts of effort. But the people against its wish obeyed the commands which the King against his wish gave. In February and March of 1813 no declamatory paper had appeared, not a word had been spoken by them when the King issued his Appeal, and in answer to this Appeal the whole nation instantaneously rose as one man. No enthusiasm; everywhere a quiet, and therefore so much the stronger sense of duty. All ran to arms and to every kind of activity, just as from the ordinary sense of civic duty, when the cry of Fire is raised one hurries to extinguish the flames. Precisely here lay the beauty, nobleness and grandeur of this truly German spirit, that no one seemed to be doing anything particular when he made the greatest sacrifices. Everyone felt that it could not be otherwise....But if these leagues mean no such great harm, if they do not aim at filling the German Governments with suspicion against each other or bringing in general or special constitutions against the will of the Princes; if they aim at nothing but uniting the best heads...in order to put themselves and their friends into administrative office, still it is inconceivable

how loyal and rational men can enter such leagues. Even those who give themselves credit for intellect and power enough to guide such leagues, even those who really have intellect and power enough and magnanimity enough to aim at nothing but what is great and noble, even they should feel how their best force is palsied by nothing so much as this clique-work. The greater and better will fall under the leadership of the small and base... The giant in the fable was involved in all the quarrels of the dwarf.

The pamphlet ends with an indignant assertion that Scharnhorst, the author's connexion, had had no part either in the Tugendbund or in any other secret society.

This publication only fills 16 pages, but it created a great sensation over Germany and opened a new chapter in Prussian history, because its author was rewarded with Orders not only by the King of Würtemberg but by the King of Prussia, who moreover acted without the advice of Hardenberg. When a torrent of answers had been poured out, Niebuhr and Schleiermacher contributing the pamphlets from which I have quoted in the chapter on the Tugendbund, the King on January 6th, 1816, prohibited any further discussion of the subject. When in the midst of such a controversy silence is imposed by a higher authority both upon the accusation and the apology, it is easy to see which side the higher authority favours.

It will be observed that Schmalz lays down two distinct propositions, the one that the party of popular initiative had been both mischievous and contemptible in the war, the other that the schemes of the same party since the war were revolutionary and amounted to a sort of new Jacobinism, in which

the German nationality took the place of humanity in the old Jacobinism. The first proposition accused the heroes of the War of Liberation, and none more than Stein, for he if any one had outrun the King's authority; but the second proposition 'went by him like the idle wind,' for he was pledged, now that the war was over, to no revolutionary schemes whatever, not even to any large plans of reorganisation. The movement for which Schmalz gave the signal was in like manner directed partly against persons, partly against opinions. It assailed and threw suspicion on the persons with whom Stein had been most closely connected; but besides this it brought into currency a system of anti-revolutionary doctrine which, though generally adverse in spirit to his reforms, was not wholly opposite to his views, indeed in some respects was in clear agreement with them. Hence he takes up a sort of middle position, regarding the ascendant party with strong dislike, but at the same time standing quite aloof from the vague liberalism which had begun to spread through Germany, and which, though he more than any one had called it into existence, he by no means approved in the new form it had taken.

A letter to Gneisenau, dated February 19th, 1816, brings together the two aspects of his position:

Your Excellency's letter does not cheer me. The Chancellor has succeeded beyond expectation in creating a Ministry that hampers him, in surrounding himself with people who neither serve nor reflect credit on him, and from a shallow calculating egoism in endangering everything good.

He will give it up, and I look for nothing.

Burke is indeed very voluminous. Your Excellency should stick to the Letter on the French Revolution; it contains a

rich store of maxims and principles on constitutional and administrative politics, the result of fifty years labour of a Member of Parliament who shone most brilliantly in that honourable assembly and bore a conspicuous and most influential part in all the great affairs in which it was concerned.

The following letter from his old friend Sack, now Superior President at Aix-la-Chapelle, gives us a view of the persecution to which his friends now began to be subjected by the new party—it reminds us of the storm which fell on the Whigs when Bute came into office:

When you wrote to me from Frankfurt you had not yourself yet learnt from conversation with the Chancellor, what tricks my old enemies the Hatzfeld-Schuckmann-Wittgenstein clique at the head of the other Obscurantists had played me. The frivolous, utterly selfish Westphalian Minister B.(ülow) with his squire or rather his master R., who were hurt because I did not receive them in the Province with French shows and escort them through it,—for which reason too they did not go to Düsseldorf,—were easily drawn into the clique, and so the Chancellor could not resist. Thereupon appeared, in regular Napoleonic fashion, on Decr. 30th in the Official Gazette an announcement that I was transferred to Swedish Pomerania; not till the 18th did I get the Order of Cabinet of the 10th announcing that H. v. Ingesleben was sent to Coblenz as Superior President over the Governments of Coblenz, Trèves and Aix-la-Chapelle, Count Solms-Laubach over those of Cologne, Düsseldorf and Cleve, to reside at Cologne, and that I was transferred to Stettin for that Government and the Government of Cöslin, without a word of explanation. As I do not think I have deserved such treatment by thirty years of service, in which I have served King and State with the greatest devotion, and by an administration of two years about which I may boldly ask whether it could have been conducted better, where in an advanced post and with the greatest difficulties to surmount, I yet won the confidence of the whole people and have reconciled it to the Prussian State as no one has ever done before,—I thought it my duty to the province for

which such a wretched arrangement is announced and felt myself bound in honour to unfold to the King the intrigue of the Obscurantists and the Stupids against me, and have now declared that I must send in my resignation if the King refuses to restore me to my post at Düsseldorf and make a different arrangement... The Schuckmann-Wittgenstein Obscurantists found this quite apropos, and have probably done me the honour to put me at the head of a party of opposition to the King here because—Görres, Arndt and Koppe live in my Government! Your Excellency has not been attacked, nay was decorated with the others on the 18th—I would congratulate you if you were not in such bad company, *e.g.* a Crelinger and other Jew fellows! But friend Gneisenau thinks that all those who have done the most important services will be persecuted as enemies of the State. In all circumstances I shall be true to my maxim, Tu ne cede malis sed contra audentior ito, sure of the approbation of all the honest and able, and therefore of yours.

But much as Stein disliked the anti-popular party he had no sort of taste for Liberalism in its new form. That is, he had no taste for loose journalism, for what he called metapolitics, nor perhaps much taste for government by assemblies. It was not perhaps so much a vote for everybody that he had desired as executive responsibility for as many as possible; but at the same time he threw the blame of the wildness that began to infect Liberalism upon the jealous Governments which would not allow it to become practical. Here are his reflexions on the famous scenes of the Wartburg Festival of 1817, addressed to a Weimar Minister, v. Gersdorff:

I quite agree with you that there was no ground for forbidding the assembly of the young people; it had a good and noble purpose, to rouse and sustain patriotic feelings, and apply a remedy to the frivolity of the Students' Associations, but the young people should either have been left to the guidance of their own good

sense and honourable feeling, or else a few sensible and respectable Jena Professors whom they could respect should have been joined to them, instead of exposing them to the influence of a couple of fools like Fries and Oken, who excited and misled many of the young minds, the one by mystical, metapolitical, anarchical nonsense, and the other a little less coarsely by his democratical scurrilities orally expressed.

Freedom of the Press is a great blessing, but as yet it has not produced any very valuable results in Weimar, and those apostles of equality, Luden, Martin, Oken, Wieland, &c. are not fit to be teachers of the nation; they serve up the bad food of the French democrats, want to level everything, and dissolve all civil society into a great fluid broth. Freedom of the Press however is very different from freedom of teaching, and nothing entitles the public teacher appointed by the State to preach murder, insurrection and destruction of everything ancient and traditional, and I would expel Fries from his chair as a thoroughly crude hollow unsound babbler.

It must be confessed that the principal cause of the ferment in Germany is to be found in the conduct of our Princes and Governments. They are the true Jacobins, they allow the lawless condition in which we have lived since 1806 to continue, and provoke and keep alive discontent and bitterness, they disturb the developement and improvement of the human mind and character and smooth the way for the Anarchists to universal destruction. We can and may depend on the good and rational disposition of the people, of our nobles, our good citizen class and our peasants; may but our *sans culotte* authors and organising bureaucrats not succeed in trampling the first into the dirt, spoiling the second by patents, and the last by divisibility of holdings, and dissolving everything into a broth of vain, bookmaking, popular orators and adventurers and a rabble of day-labourers both in town and country! Against this an omnipotent and benevolent Providence will protect us.

This letter certainly shows Stein in a new light. We recognize his usual manner in the paragraph about the conduct of the Princes and Governments, but in the rest we come upon a vein of Conservatism

which Stein has never shown before, and in the last paragraph we find something like a matured Conservative creed. The persons attacked are journalists and Professors of Jena who, under the shelter of the liberal Duke of Weimar and of the Constitution he had just given, were beginning to rouse and organise public opinion. It was characteristic of Germany that these first signs of political consciousness came from a University, and that Professors took the lead in the new movement. Luden had commenced the Nemesis in 1814; Oken the Isis in 1816; Wieland's People's Friend began a little later. Fries, as Professor, taught a new political creed founded on the philosophy of Kant. Stein was assuredly not wrong in calling the new school metapolitical, and he might well wonder, particularly as the phenomenon was new to him, what would come of the diffusion of notions so vague and idealistic, but it appears that he was quite unjust in charging them with favouring sedition or revolution. 'Never,' says Gervinus, 'has there been a more innocent Press;' and he adds, 'Stein cannot have given himself the trouble of ascertaining its real character!'

I cannot but remark parenthetically upon the disagreeable shock which an Englishman experiences when he finds University Professors treated by Stein as 'public teachers appointed by the State' and accountable to the Administration on the footing of Government officials.

Nevertheless in the tone Stein here takes there is nothing really new or inconsistent with his character as a Reformer. He had always been an official and had looked at liberty from the point of view of the

Government. So long as it was imparted by the Government and served to strengthen public action, he was heartily in favour of it; but we saw in the case of the Tugendbund that he had a great horror of anything like a Jacobin Club, that is, of discussion of politics unregulated by the State and uncontrolled by a definite sense of responsibility. In other words, he was in favour of liberty, but was exceedingly anxious that Germany should not take the same road to it as had been taken by France.

As we have mentioned the Duke of Weimar, we may insert here a description by Arndt of a meeting between him and Stein at Cologne in the autumn of 1815[1]. Arndt acted as Cicerone in showing to the Duke the antiquities of the place, and spent more than one evening with 'the two great people.'

> They were on perfectly easy terms (he writes), almost like old chums; the Imperial Baron not for a moment inferior to the higher-born Prince. But, what was curious, when serious subjects were spoken of or only pointed at or lightly alluded to, as happens in easy conversation, Stein seemed always the Prince and the other often not much more than a servant.... He seemed here merely the easy scoffer and mocker or hypercritical sceptical annotator and commentator, a Mephistopheles who perhaps oftener dragged Goethe down than raised him up. It was also odd that he had ever an itch to provoke Stein and amuse himself, as it were, with his irritability, for he remained himself through all the fiery blows and counterblows of the Baron in princely indifference like one of the gods of Epicurus.
>
> One evening was especially lively. The Duke was fresh from Stuttgard, from his fat cousin. Full of the impressions of the last few weeks he began to revile the Würtemberg Estates, how the fat King was right not to grant such claims as they made, all

[1] It seems to be by a slip of the pen that in 'Meine Wanderungen, &c.,' p. 227, he puts the meeting in 1817.

this with the regular terms of pettifogging scriveners and attorneys. Then Stein spoke: Your Royal Highness may be right in some respects, I will not stand up for all the arts and tricks of all the scriveners and attorneys in the world, but in this matter you speak and feel as a Prince: but the King of Würtemberg should not forget that Napoleon could not give him what was not his own; the Würtembergers, the towns with their burgomasters and clerks made the small Count of Teck into a Duke by buying out and up the Imperial Immediate Nobles, and so winning and rounding off the country. They had their rights and liberties as Estates, and it is only those that they want and ask back.

Then strayed the conversation for a little to reports spread by the newspapers. The Hamburg paper had announced among other things that 'the English were beginning again to beat the recruiting-drum among them for their West Indian colonies,' and the Duke thought it an excellent thing, for 'it would rid Germany of scamps and rogues and mad Jacobin puzzle-heads besides, of which we had too many.' The Knight interrupted him, 'Your Highness may be right that it is no harm for many wild fellows to feel the wind about their ears in some foreign country, but many innocent lads too are seduced by those recruiters and entrapped to die miserably in the marshes and rice-fields of the tropical world and never see their native country again. But there is a point of honour to be considered too, which I would point out to you and which in these days our German princes should really begin to learn from foreigners. He who should beat such a drum in England and France would be instantly seized and punished in purse and person and perhaps put for two or three years into a cell where neither sun nor moon are seen.'

The conversation then settled on Zacharias Werner, the romanticist poet, who by this time had turned catholic priest, and who, as readers of Carlyle's Essays know, was mourned at his death by three widows at once:

The Duke told a number of disagreeable anecdotes about the poet, who had lived under his eyes at Weimar for some time, all in his easy-going loose way, so that the Baron's crest began to swell.

'The poor fellow,' said the Duke, 'had got it into his head that in a kind of material transmigration of the soul he was to make a passage through all conceivable female natures until he should find the one whom God had created especially for him. It was his poetical physiology.' 'Poetical!' broke in Stein, 'you should have said princely!' The Duke ended with the moral that in point of fact every man had done the same: 'you too'—he turned to Stein—'have, I dare say, not always lived like a Joseph.' 'If it were so,' answered Stein, 'that concerns no one, but I have always had a hatred of dirty conversation, and I do not think it proper for a German Prince to talk in this way before young officers'—there were several present along with the older men. The Duke was silent, and there followed a death-like stillness. After a few minutes the Duke passed his hand across his face and continued the conversation as though nothing had happened; but the company had been hot and cold by turns. And Colonel v. Ende was heard to say afterwards that he would rather stand the fire of two batteries than take a part for long in such conversation, while Count Solms Laubach, Superior President of the Rhine Province, exclaimed, 'How he does go on with Princes! I feel quite hot still. I was in mortal fear that there would be a scene.'

Arndt adds that in his opinion there *had been* an excellent scene.

Thus we see Stein speaking as a leader of opposition to Princes, but at the same time renouncing all connexion with the newer school of liberal journalism and protesting against such a dissolution of the old form of society as seems to him to be promoted by it. His political creed evidently enters into a new phase with the Peace. During the war we have known him as a bold Reformer, but peace has altered the conditions of the problem. It becomes important, therefore, to ascertain precisely what his new opinions are.

Two large questions now occupied the public mind. The first was the system of popular repre-

sentation which was to be introduced into Prussia. The second was the maintenance or abolition of that triple division of society into noblesse, citizens and peasants, which had received so serious a shock from Stein's Emancipating Edict.

The first question had been put before the public in the most formal manner by the Government itself. On May 22nd, 1815, that is while the Congress was still sitting and almost at the moment when it became evident that the Federal Act would afford no solid guarantee for constitutional liberties, the following Ordinance had appeared:

We, Frederick William, by the Grace of God, &c.

By our ordinance of the 30th of March we have decreed for our Monarchy a regular administration with regard to the former circumstances of the Provinces.

Although the history of the Prussian State shows that the happy condition of civil freedom and the stability of a just administration founded upon order was guaranteed as far as is possible in the imperfection and frailty of human institutions by the qualities of the Sovereigns and their union with the nation, nevertheless that it may be more firmly established, that a pledge of our confidence may be given to the Prussian nation, and that the principles on which our ancestors and ourself have conducted the government of our realm with anxious care for the happiness of our subjects may be faithfully handed down to posterity and durably preserved by means of a written document as the Constitution of the Prussian Realm, we have ordained as follows:

§ 1. A Representation of the People is to be established.

§ 2. For this end the Provincial Estates are (*a*) to be restored and arranged in accordance with the need of the time where they still exist with more or less efficiency, (*b*) to be organized where they do not exist.

§ 3. Out of the Provincial Estates the Assembly of the Representatives of the Country is to be chosen, which shall hold its session at Berlin.

§ 4. The action of the Representatives of the Country shall extend to deliberation upon all subjects of legislation which concern the personal and proprietary rights of the citizens of the State including taxation.

§ 5. A Commission shall be appointed without loss of time to sit at Berlin, which shall be composed of intelligent public officials and residents of the Provinces.

§ 6. This Commission shall occupy itself with (1) the organization of the Provincial Estates, (2) the organization of the Representatives of the Country, (3) the elaboration of a written Constitution according to the principles laid down.

§ 7. It shall meet on September 1st of this year.

§ 8. Our Chancellor of State is entrusted with the execution of this Ordinance, and shall speedily lay before us the result of the labours of the Commission.

He shall name the members of it and shall preside in it, but has permission in cases of hindrance to appoint a substitute for himself.

Authentically under our royal signature with the impression of our royal seal attached. Done at Vienna, May 22d, 1815.

FREDERICK WILLIAM.

C. PRINCE VON HARDENBERG.

This document, perhaps the last I shall insert, reminds us of the Emancipating Edict which was the commencement of the great work of reforming legislation. It has the same brevity and comprehensiveness, and no doubt when he issued it Hardenberg felt that he had won for himself the honour of consummating the great transition of Prussia. His courage is to be admired, but in this instance the fates were against him. And indeed it may well be doubted whether, considering the vast work of territorial reconstruction that lay before Prussia at that moment, it was reasonable to pledge the King to so much in addition. The notion of Pertz that the step was taken on the urgent advice of

Stein seems irreconcilable with Stein's own statement quoted above, that 'all through the years 1813—1815 Hardenberg observed a careful reticence towards him about all things and persons which concerned the internal Departments.'

The new party of reaction won their first victory when they procured the indefinite postponement of the promised Commission. Meanwhile the principle laid down by Hardenberg, that the new representative Assembly should be founded upon the old institution of Estates, roused into motion a vast quantity of dormant Conservatism. Wherever Estates still existed they seemed to have gained a new lease of life and began to clamour for the maintenance of their old privileges. This was particularly the case in Westphalia and in the district of Münster. Stein's favourite district, the County Mark, called loudly for the old Constitution. 'We are Markers,' they said, 'and love our old peculiar Fatherland!' With these local agitations Stein is much occupied in these years.

At last in the spring of 1817 Government began to redeem the promises made in the Ordinance of May, 1815. On March 20th the Council of State had been formed for the first time, not Stein's Council of State, but, as was explained above, a purely Legislative Council. From this body the King then proceeded to name the promised Commission. It consisted of officials, many of whom are now known to us, Hardenberg, Prince Radziwill, Gneisenau, Brockhausen, Altenstein, Beymè, Kircheisen, Humboldt, Bülow, Schuckmann, Wittgenstein, Klewitz, Boyen, General Knesebeck, Dean

Spiegel, Stägemann, Grolmann, Ancillon, Rhediger, Savigny, Eichhorn, Daniels. The Ordinance had promised that residents from the Provinces should sit along with the officials on the Commission. Accordingly it was at first proposed to summon provincial Notables from Berlin. But an Assembly of Notables to be followed by a States-General brought 1789 too vividly to mind, and on the motion of Klewitz it was resolved that the Commission should go to the provinces, instead of the provinces sending deputies to the Commission. On July 7 the Commission met, and Hardenberg read a speech in which he announced the King's readiness to consult the Estates on legislation, but at the same time his resolution to grant them only a consultative position and to exclude them from all interference in the administration. Three Commissioners were then selected who were to travel into the provinces and collect opinions on the two questions, whether it was possible and expedient that the peasantry should be represented along with the noblesse and the towns, and whether Estates General or only Provincial Estates were desired. Thus the question of reviving the medieval Estates was prejudged. The Commissioners nominated were Altenstein for the Western Provinces, Beyme for the Provinces of Prussia and Pomerania, Klewitz for Brandenburg, Saxony, Silesia and Poland.

The French Revolution had taught the profound importance of the difference between an Assembly of Estates and a Representative Parliament. In the latter interests are mixed and fused together, so that something which may roughly be called the

general interest is compounded out of them; in the former interests are held distinct and marshalled, as it were, in battle array against each other, while, as no arbitrament is provided, the result is commonly nothing but a deadlock. Nevertheless, as the institution of Estates had a root in the country, it might be thought better to mould them by alterations into a modern Parliament than to abolish them and construct such a Parliament in their place. The States-General of France had transformed themselves very speedily into a National Assembly. Thus might a genuine Liberal of the French type, such as Hardenberg, reason. But it was possible for the Conservatives to arrest this process at an early stage. If Estates should be revived, it was still possible to prevent the meeting of States-General, for the old Estates had been Provincial. It is true that this could not be done unless the King broke his promise, for a States-General is most explicitly promised in the Ordinance of May, 1815, but it might be possible to represent that the Confederation was interested in the matter, and that the King had offered more than he had a right to give. For his part, if he determined to yield either reluctantly or gladly to such pressure, it was open to him to say that he had not bound himself by any limit of time, and under this pretext to adjourn indefinitely the fulfilment of his promise.

And thus the political controversy of the age took shape. It will be well to mark here the principal stages through which it passed. Hardenberg, it appears, wanted neither good-will nor courage to perform all that he had promised;

nor perhaps in 1815 did the King. The excitement of the war still held him, and he had seen, while all his officials were wanted in the camp, practical self-government introduced throughout his kingdom. But the King was more subject than Hardenberg to the influence of the Reaction, and in 1818 and 1819 the Reaction gained strength everywhere. The controversy was not confined to Prussia, for it had been provided in the 13th Article of the Act of the German Confederation that Constitutions on the principle of Estates should exist in all states belonging to the Federation. From Austria now came a theory, to which Gentz lent the support of his name and pen, that this Article had a negative as well as a positive force, and that it prohibited any Constitution which was not on the principle of Estates, and therefore a representative Constitution. If this doctrine were admitted, it might be argued that the promise of the King of Prussia had been inconsistent with the Act of Confederation, and moreover that the Confederation as composed of Monarchs was interested in preventing the monarchical principle from being weakened in any German State. Accordingly in the Vienna Final Act of May, 1820, it is laid down (Article 57) that 'as the German Confederation with the exception of the Free Towns consists of Sovereign Princes, it follows from the principle here laid down that the entire authority of Government must reside intact in the Head of the State, and that by a Constitution on the principle of Estates the Sovereign can only be bound to the cooperation of the Estates in the exercise of particular defined rights.' The result of this triumph

of the Reaction is that the King begins to separate himself from Hardenberg. A new Commission to consider the question of Estates is nominated in 1821. The Crown Prince is its President, and the members are Schuckmann, Wittgenstein, Ancillon, and Albrecht. In this Commission the plan of stopping short at Provincial Assemblies is matured, and in spite of the decided opposition of Hardenberg it obtains the victory.

On June 5th, 1823, that is after Hardenberg's death, appeared the General Law for the Regulation of the Provincial Estates. It closes with the words, 'When it will be advisable to summon the General Estates, and how they should be developed out of the Provincial Estates, are matters on which we reserve to our paternal care for the interests of the country to decide further.' Thus Frederick William IV. began his public career as Crown Prince by counselling this unhappy evasion of a solemn promise. The consequences were to be reaped by himself in 1848. Suffice it to say, that the system of Provincial Estates was maintained till 1847, when the United Diet met for the first time on April 11th, and sat till June 26th. In the next year, and in the midst of revolutionary disturbances then for the first time seen in Prussia, the States-General made way for the modern Parliament of Prussia. But Stein lived only to see and to take a share in the Estates of his own Province of Westphalia.

I now come to consider the part borne by Stein in this controversy. The best beginning will be made by quoting his sentiments on the fundamental point, whether the great promise should be

kept. He wrote thus to Eichhorn on January 7th, 1818:

Dr Schlosser will convey to you this letter and speak to you of the Estates question which is threatened by a coalition of domestic and external adversaries. They do not blush to utter and spread with the most insolent shamelessness principles of scandalous Macchiavellism; the Act of Confederation, they say, promises no doubt Estates to the Territories, but the time and the mode it leaves to be determined by the wisdom, *i.e.* the caprice of the Government; the subjects have only a right of expectation and the Confederation has no authority to protect them, nay it is bound if disturbances take place to suppress them without concerning itself about the *merita caussæ*, the motive of the disturbances.

These principles are avowed by Prince Metternich and Count Rechberg, they guide the conduct of the Austrian and Bavarian Representatives in the Confederation and at the German Courts, and it is asserted that Prussia and Hannover will be converted to them.

I will not inquire whether a Cabinet in the abstract or whether the Austrian Cabinet acts worthily or wisely to take refuge in such sophistries, but I will affirm steadfastly and persistently that they are unserviceable, nay absolutely pernicious to Prussia.

Prussia is a Protestant State in which for 200 years a great and many-sided life and a spirit of free investigation has been developed which can neither be suppressed nor misled by jugglery. You will not make the dullest man in the nation believe that it depends on the will of the Prince when and how he shall perform an engagement which he has taken, or that if he offers resistance to arbitrary maltreatment a neighbour has a right to kill him.

Moreover in Prussia a series of promises have been given by a brave, chivalrous, pious and honourable King, which would be most grievously violated if we adopted such a parcel of sophisms. In the year 1815 the King gave a formal and public promise to give his people a representative Constitution, the Chancellor of State repeated it in all the answers he gave to the different Provincial Estates when they submitted their grievances; new expectations were created when in the Council of State a special Committee for the Estates Question was formed, when the Superior

Presidents in the Provinces were employed upon it, when three Ministers were sent out to examine public opinion in the different parts of the Monarchy, and to collect materials relating to the past and to the present: and now all these promises, all these facts are to prove a mere juggle and all expectations to be disappointed!

In what a degree will the discontent of the nation be heightened and heated and the moral force of the Prussian State paralysed, which ought to compensate that inferiority to its neighbours in physical strength which is caused by its inferior wealth and population and its want of cohesion! On nothing but such moral force can our system of defence and of finance rest; that readiness to incur great sacrifices which both demand in time of war can only come from the public spirit which will only strike root where there exists participation in public affairs.

But the same letter acquaints us that he is in favour generally of the method of revival rather than that of new creation:

As to the form which should be selected for the Constitution we may either resolve to create a completely new one or to revive the old forms, which have a historical basis, with such alterations as the times may require; the latter way is the simpler and easier. It is a transition not a revolution, it supports itself on memories, on what is known, it excludes metapolitical questions that lead too far, with which our unpractical savants and pamphleteers occupy themselves, and equally those defects of the old Constitutions which through lapse of time have grown insufferable, exemption from taxation and insufficient representation.

The Reformer of 1807 might go as far as this in wise Conservatism without fear of being misunderstood, particularly after he had pronounced with such energy in favour of further progress. He continues in the same strain:

It is a pernicious opinion that the object of the constitutional negotiations in Prussia is the concluding of a new Social Contract; according to that the Prussian State would be treated as if it were a colony, as if it had neither People nor Prince, neither rights nor

duties, and so we should see if not the scenes of 1789 at least the tedious expensive useless ranting tongue-fence of the Würtembergers renewed in Berlin...The vain sansculottist scribblers should not be allowed without any vocation to lead or perplex our great national affairs.

But we always find that his indignation against those who would counsel the King to break his promise of a Constitution more than keeps pace with his repugnance for those who recommend a Constitution on the French model.

The best general exposition of his views that I know is to be found in some comments written in February, 1819, on the elaborate and comprehensive essay which had been addressed to him by W. v. Humboldt. He begins with a strong expression of confidence in the people. He sets out, he tells us, with the conviction that the inhabitants of this country are sensible and practical people, trained by a long historic life, loyal, brave, pious and thoughtful, that the majority of them consist of proprietors of land, either on a great, middling or small scale, whose habits have been kept simple and pure by the occupations of country life and moderate possession, and that immorality, frivolous love of novelty, or passionate pursuit of enjoyment or wealth do not predominate among them. Their power of self-government, he says, was shown in 1806, when the Government was completely dissolved from November to July, and yet the people then behaved well and showed more patriotism than the officials. He then declares that a representative Constitution will strengthen the position of the King, which is weak in a regime of officials. As to personal

government, he says, very few kings really exercise it, and these few would be able to do so under a representative Constitution. 'But,' he goes on, 'even vigorous and capable autocrats only in rare instances follow their own personal views, commonly they follow those of their officials over whom they are contented to preside, and the forms and maxims which they find current. This remark applies to Frederick the Great and Joseph II.; the former was by no means given to arbitrary alteration of what existed, which it would be easy for me to prove,'—a remarkable statement, made, be it remembered, by one of Frederick's own officials—'the latter, because on the contrary he abandoned himself to busy, restless rage for innovation, was compelled by the general discontent to withdraw many of his designs, which he might have carried out with success, as I have often heard very intelligent men in Austria say, by moderation, by regard for traditional forms and by improvement of them.' In Prussia, he adds, an unreasonable opposition is less to be feared than elsewhere, because, apart from the well-proved character of the people, it is plain to the meanest understanding that to embarrass the Government there is to endanger the national independence.

He proceeds to reject decidedly the plan of an Assembly with only consultative powers, to which, as we remember, the King had committed himself in 1817; he declares it inconsistent with the expectations which had been raised by the Ordinance of 1815. The Notables in France had been a useless Assembly, so had the Representatives whom Hardenberg had more than once summoned, a laughing-

stock to the people. In one word, a consultative Assembly is either an inert mass, or else a noisy crowd prattling aimlessly without dignity or estimation; it will satisfy no one and be unanimously censured at home and abroad. Our Assembly must not only have a power of decision; it must also have an initiative (here Stein goes beyond Humboldt). To refuse this right is only to show mistrust, and the Assembly can always exercise it practically by disguising it under the form of complaint against something that exists or something that has been omitted.

The Parliament is to consist of two Chambers, the King appointing Life Members to the Upper Chamber. Ministers are to take part in the deliberations.

But it is the constituent body rather than the Parliament itself that gives rise to difficulties. The modern conception of a Parliament, which was formed by abstraction from what the English Parliament had gradually in the course of centuries become, did not correspond at all to those rudiments which were to be found in several Prussian provinces, and which it was considered so essential to make use of. The modern Parliament is nothing if not representative; its object is to save the citizens themselves the trouble of assembling to express their own opinions on political affairs. But the Prussian Estates had quite another nature, and seemed to have quite another object. In them the greater part of the nation was wholly unrepresented, while it was equally noticeable that the constituent bodies were not districts or fractions of the population, but corporations. Now there was room for a great

difference of opinion on the question whether this ancient principle should be retained or abandoned, the principle of composing the Parliament out of representatives, not of mere population divided into sections, but of organised corporations.

Stein's opinion is expressed distinctly as follows:

Throughout Germany the Body of Estates consisted of three or in some parts two Corporations, Clergy, Noblesse and Towns, or else Towns and Noblesse. The great mass of the inhabitants was excluded, because common freedom had sunk into clientship, and the insignificance in early times of many towns which have since become flourishing deprived them of a place in the Diets. This incomplete representation of the interest of the country must be remedied not by a new creation, which is always hazardous, which injures the interests and rights of many and so causes discontent, and excites without satisfying the expectations and passions of all.

He agrees with Humboldt that the distinction between townsmen and country people, caused by the difference of their occupations, is a strictly political distinction which cannot be disregarded. As to the Noblesse, he writes:

In the Prussian Monarchy it still forms a numerous class of citizens possessing large landed property and many important political posts, and in most of the provinces it still forms a corporation—it is not scattered or banished or crushed or plundered, to the great regret of a part of the democratic school; if we chose now to level it and mow it down with the scythe of equality and liberty, a numerous class would be aggrieved, maltreated and stirred to deep discontent; the plutocracy and the bureaucracy would be advanced while the landed interest would be lowered. But (he remarks) the exemption of the Noblesse from taxation I hold to be an indefensible privilege, mischievous to the order itself; it is possessed only in East Prussia, Pomerania, the Electoral Mark, and the Prussian part of Saxony, that is, a population of 3,658,000 souls or a little more than a third of the whole population.

Thus we see what he meant above when he spoke of the two defects of the old Constitution which had grown insufferable, exemption from taxation, and insufficient representation.

Practically his scheme is as follows:

The Noblesse is to form a corporation, and choose deputies to the Second Chamber, in which the representatives of the towns and country districts are to appear, and out of a part of the noble corporation, the Lords and the higher Clergy, an Upper Chamber is to be composed. When I apply these ideas to Westphalia I find here an excellent peasant-class which the French law of division has not yet reduced to poverty, several prosperous towns, and a Noblesse consisting of 5 or 6 mediatised and 50 to 60 noble families, of which some twenty have a yearly income of between 100,000 and 15,000 thalers; lastly, one or two bishops and chapters.

It is evident that he has here the English system in view, a House of Lords composed of greater barons and bishops, a House of Commons consisting of representatives of counties, drawn partly from the lesser barons, and of boroughs; only that he adds special representatives of the peasant class.

Let us observe that it is not by any means from blind conservatism that he thus tries to build up again the ruins of an ancient system. He has before his eyes a definite evil, the plague of 'meta-politics,' which had broken out in all the Universities and in the Liberal Press, and of which he did not at all exaggerate the absurdity and perverseness. From 'the book-making popular orators and adventurers,' if they should get into the Assemblies, he expects extravagances as absurd though not so cruel as those of the French Revolution. In order

to avoid these he takes refuge in property, interest, tradition. Government, we must remember, was in Prussia already philosophical and speculative enough. It was much in the hands of thinkers of the type of Schön or Altenstein. What it sought in popular assemblies was not new ideas, or an awakening stimulus, but rather a closer acquaintance with actual interests, a better means of learning 'where the shoe pinched.' It is interesting to notice that Humboldt lays it down as almost self-evident that the Estates will represent the principle of Conservatism, and the Government that of Reform; if it had been otherwise in some recent cases, as for instance in France at the Revolution, such cases he holds to be altogether exceptional and abnormal.

So far then Stein's views seem those of a wise statesman. He is heartily in favour of a Parliament for its own sake, passionately in favour of it since the honour of the Government has been pledged to grant it, and prepared to give it substantial powers. On the other hand he bears in mind the great lesson of the French Revolution, that there are Parliaments of a most mischievous and pernicious kind, and he is most anxious to create one which shall represent the common-sense and good feeling of the community rather than its speculative conceit. He is sanguine that the nation is at heart discreet and pious, but in the age of Schelling and Oken he cannot help confessing that there is as much 'perilous stuff' in the German mind as Rousseau had ever put into the French. How to neutralise the effect of this and bring into play only the healthy side of public opinion, is for him the

problem; and it is not unnatural that he should see the solution in a rigid adherence to forms and institutions already existing, and in a closer imitation than the French had made of the English model.

Nevertheless this course also was open to an objection. True, the French had abolished the old corporations, and had not succeeded in making an efficient Parliament without them; but it was not certain that a Parliament artificially composed out of them at a late period would really resemble that English Parliament in which they had grown together through many centuries. It was not certain that these corporations had vigour enough in Prussia to support the burden of new powers and responsibilities, and to give new powers is radically different from not taking away old ones. Stein had himself dealt these very corporations a mortal blow by his Emancipating Edict, which in taking, for example, from the noblesse its monopoly of so-called knightly estates had destroyed the title on which its privileges and exemptions rested. Consequently the proposal of founding the Parliament upon the ancient corporations opened the further question whether those corporations could be strengthened and revived.

There was still a trace of the old character of the noblesse in what was called patrimonial jurisdiction. Stein writes:

> The question rises how the constitution of the commune can be brought into a convenient relation with the patrimonial jurisdiction.
>
> The inferior authorities through which the State exercises police and jurisdiction are

either officials appointed directly by itself,
or municipalities,
or dominia, landlords.

The first system was introduced in the Western provinces, from the Weser to the foreign frontier (but excepting Thuringia) by foreign authority; it is proposed to remedy its inconveniences by introducing the second. But as the rights of the landlord are still in force in the Eastern provinces, the question rises whether they should be abolished and a perfectly uniform system of Local Government introduced over the whole State.

Such a measure would sever the bond between the landlord and his tenants which is in many respects advantageous; it would be a revolution and not a gradual transition such as may be effected more gently, and it increases the cost of administration, which at the same time it makes more burdensome to the inhabitant by increasing the distance of the official from his residence.

Patrimonial jurisdiction comprises police and justice, the latter was exercised either alone by the manorial judge or by him with the help of the Village Court (Dorfgericht) as in Silesia.

How far justice by Patrimonial Village Court deserves to be maintained I will leave to lawyers to decide, but my experience convinces me that the system adopted in the Western Provinces, by which all disputes however petty, the inquest into all, the most insignificant offences in forest or field, is erected into a formal legal process at the district court, causes intolerable expense, delay and loss of time.

For this reason he will not simply supersede the jurisdiction of the landlord, but suggests a somewhat complicated method by which it might be combined with that of the commune.

Again there was still a trace of the old character of the citizen class in the institution of the Guild. Accordingly Stein writes:

In respect of the Guilds I remark that the restoration of them (purged of all trade abuses) is urgently necessary, and that they are to be considered as an educational institution to train the

apprentices and the journeymen to discipline and obedience, as an institution of instruction for the acquirement of good thorough knowledge of the trade and skill in the exercise of it, and as a means of hindering thoughtless settlement and premature marriage, the fatal root of a worthless population burdensome to the community; also that the abolition of unrestricted freedom of engaging in trade, the pernicious system of patents, is urgently necessary.

Once more, the class of peasantry seemed to retain its old character so long as it lived in the country and cultivated the soil. Accordingly Stein writes:

On the maintenance of peasant-holdings and of noble estates in masses of proportionate size depends the preservation of a healthy class of country people, on which the defence of the country, morality and worth of every kind depend.

Through unlimited divisibility (of holdings) the peasant class will be dissolved into day-labourers, rabble, and the noblesse from an independent noblesse of property into a noblesse of office and of the Court.

We have now before us the political creed of Stein's latest period, which may at first sight seem very different and much less liberal than the creed which is implied in the Emancipating Edict and announced in the Political Testament. Did he then cease to be a Reformer in his later years?

Observe, first, how ardently he advocates a Parliament, and insists that it shall be a real Parliament with a power of decision and an initiative. In this point, which certainly is fundamental, he betrays no tendency to reaction.

Observe, next, that in the Political Testament it is plainly stated that Stein believed it possible and desirable to maintain the noblesse in some form, and

that he introduced into the Emancipating Edict a provision expressly intended to prevent the absorption of peasant-holdings.

Again, observe that his reason for wishing to maintain patrimonial jurisdiction is by no means a repugnance to innovation but a repugnance to bureaucracy. He prefers—and on the ground not of prejudice but of observation—the local magnate to the paid official, and would retain him for the very same reason by which he justified one of his boldest innovations, the Town Ordinance. The very language in which he pleads for patrimonial jurisdiction is identical with that in which he advocated local self-government in 1807.

Perhaps the most unexpected declaration in the above extracts, considering that it is made by the author of the Emancipating Edict, is that 'the abolition of unrestricted freedom of engaging in trade, the pernicious system of Patents, is urgently necessary.' But we must not suppose that he means to recant his old doctrines, or that he would like to revive the restrictions which he himself had abolished. Those restrictions had abolished caste, not moral regulation. He is pointing not to his own legislation, which had thrown trade open to the noble and the peasant, but to the legislation of Hardenberg, which had freed it from the restraints of the guild. In the Edict of December, 1810, it had been declared that a Trade Certificate should give its holder the right of practising a trade in the whole extent of the Monarchy, exempt from interference by any corporation or individual. By another Edict, dated September 7th, 1811, Hardenberg may be said to have

disestablished the guilds, that is, he reduced them to voluntary associations deprived of all coercive force.

Now it is no new thing for Stein to oppose the measures of Hardenberg. He, and his followers even more than himself, had always regarded the reforms of Hardenberg as too French in their character. How he may have regarded this particular reform we may gather from the following extracts from a pamphlet published in 1821[1]:

It is not to be denied that there were great abuses in the guild system. It impeded entrance into trades more than was good, it created a sort of monopoly which was often oppressive to the rest of the inhabitants; but no more than a sensible gardener cuts a tree down which has borne and still bears excellent fruit, simply because it spreads its branches too wide and will not let anything grow under its shade—though he may lop the overgrown branches—no more ought we in this case to abolish at once all the ties which have been so useful and might continue to be so....

I myself used to think it would be very useful to leave it to men's choice what trade they would exercise and where, and that unrestricted competition was a boon; but a very short experience has already proved convincingly how mischievous this principle is. So many people throw themselves into one and the same trade that they do not find bread but starve together....I must mention another great advantage of the guilds which we have now been deprived of. It is well known that they had formerly the right of expelling members for disreputable behaviour. The decision now in such cases falls to the judge, who however is by no means in a condition to form so accurate a judgment on them as the members of the trade who are so closely concerned. Hence the judge often acquits a guilty person (if he is not manifestly convicted) whom his colleagues would have expelled because they have no doubt where the judge cannot but doubt. I have known many

[1] Bülow-Cummerow: *Ueber die Verwaltung des Staatskanzlers Fürsten v. Hardenberg*, p. 46.

pernicious examples of the kind, and with time the matter grows worse and worse, for people very soon learn to behave so that nothing can be proved against them before the judge.

On the whole we do not find Stein retrograding from the position he had held in 1808 on any point, except to some extent on the question of patrimonial jurisdiction, where he is influenced by his horror of bureaucracy. On the great controversy of the age he is staunch. No one more constantly insists on the necessity of summoning a Parliament and giving it substantial powers. But the creed of Liberals, as it gradually shapes itself in the hands of journalists and popular orators, has too strong a taint of the French 'metapolitical' method to suit him. Self-government, that system of unpaid service in local government, which used to be the pride of England, though in the present generation we seem to have lost our old esteem of it, he prizes highly, all the more highly because he had experience of the languid bureaucracy which seemed to him the only alternative. Nor does he wish to bring in the regime of unrestricted competition. Unorganised trade, with all its evils of scamped work and adulteration, shocks him in prospect, as it has shocked so many thoughtful Englishmen in the retrospect. But on this point he retracts no opinion.

Nevertheless he could not always escape the charge of deserting his principles. This charge was freely made against him by the acrid Liberalism of the next reign, which in general accepted Schön's representation of the Stein-Hardenberg period. The strongest fact adduced in proof was that one of his greatest admirers, Kunth, had been so much shocked

by his defence of guilds, that in order to conceal the apostasy from posterity, he had committed to the flames on his death-bed all the letters he had received from Stein in the course of twenty-five years. That the letters were burnt is true, but there must have been some other reason for burning them, for his controversy with Stein on guilds took place in 1826, and would have been sufficiently concealed by burning the letters of *three* years. There is no doubt however that Kunth was annoyed by Stein's defence of guilds, and that he did appeal against it to the Emancipating Edict and the Political Testament. Thus, on receiving from Stein a paper on guilds, written by Lamennais in the Drapeau Blanc, he writes as follows:

On the paper in the Drapeau Blanc I should like to be silent, but I will not since it comes from you. But I cannot make the use of it you wish, nor any use at all. For my own sake I cannot. I hold and shall firmly hold to the principles on which our greatest laws since 1807 have been grounded, the Edict abolishing serfdom, the Town Ordinance, &c., and to the views of the noble Turgot, your intellectual kinsman, to the experiences of such men as Chaptal, Jouy, and many others, Germans among them, and to my own for so many years. Who knows the Abbé de Lamennais? *I* don't! But nothing is easier than to pen in the study an unctuous pietistic declamation and construct *a priori* a condition of things which never did nor could exist.... I only wish your Excellency would not talk to me on this subject, or else stick to the principles you avowed formerly and in your Political Testament, principles to which the great majority of your true admirers would be deeply distressed to see you unfaithful; all the more as you have been unconnected with the Administration for fourteen years, and therefore cannot fully understand the practical working of the principle, which you were the first to bring into life among us.

In the last sentence probably the sting lies. The practical effect of Stein's words at the moment was what pained his old supporters. The words might be defensible and he might prove that he had changed no opinion, and yet, uttered just then, they might promote the Reaction in a way which he in his retirement could not understand. He might speak as a political philosopher, but he would be listened to as a practical politician.

Kunth died in 1829. In his last letter to Stein he wrote thus: 'At the beginning of November twenty-five years will have passed since our acquaintance began. In a very short time I had come to regard you as the model of a statesman, but very soon too, and ever more and more, I learnt to honour and love you as a noble character, and in this feeling I have been confirmed by your last letter.'

CHAPTER II.

REACTION.

WHEN we have learned what view Stein took of the leading political questions of the new era there is little more to be said of politics. We have only to mark the stages by which Prussia passed out of the Stein-Hardenberg period and Stein's alienation from public life became complete and final.

It is not worth while to linger over the interviews which Stein had with Altenstein, when he came in 1817 into Westphalia to interrogate public opinion, nor over memorials on the position of the Estates, which were presented to Hardenberg early in 1818, when he visited the Rhine country, signed by the noblesse of Jülich, Cleve, Berg and Stein's old County Mark, also by those of Münster, although Stein signed some of them and was busily occupied for some time in the preparation of them. The hopefulness of these years was overclouded by the spread of reaction in the course of 1818. As the murder of the Duke of Berri brought reaction to a crisis in France, so and about the same time

was it announced to the world in Germany by a startling occurrence. Though this occurrence did not bring Stein's name before the public, yet it affected closely some whom he knew, and, we may say, his own circle.

When the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle met in the autumn of 1818, there was circulated among the members of it, in a manuscript form, a pamphlet entitled Mémoire sur l'état actuel de l'Allemagne, of which the author was the Moldavian, Alexander v. Stourdza. It advanced a step further the work which had been commenced by that of Schmalz on Political Societies. I give some specimens of its style.

Germany is in the bosom of peace; but is she at rest?...We content ourselves with adducing a few facts which have happened within the last few years, the sect of Poschel, their fancies and fanatical assemblies, the rising at Breslau, the Wartburg disturbances, the bloody dispute of the students at Göttingen, the last religious troubles in Saxony, the popular ferment in Suabia, and the refusal to pay the public taxes; more than all this the surprising phenomenon of emigrations whose course in all directions has scarcely been interrupted up to this day; all these facts unhappily concur to refute the assertions of those who instead of looking the evil, real as it is, in the face obstinately persist in denying its existence.

He then assigns three causes for this inquietude.

(1) The universal displacement of individuals and of social classes: an immediate effect of the Revolution.

(2) The indefiniteness and dissolution of the religious ideas which, as they are the first need of suffering humanity, have become the principal weapon of passion and error.

(3) The ever-increasing sins of public education which, passing all bounds, have become of such magnitude that even the

most complete fabric of legislation and administration can scarcely any longer remedy them.

From the first of these evils he finds to have followed

(1) an undefined unsatisfied craving for activity which must find its object within its own province, if it is not to spend itself without end on the outward world; (2) a striving in the enlightened classes of society after the political union of Germany; (3) a clearly expressed discontent in the lower orders, who are weary of changing their masters, and overwhelmed by the burden of a too complicated administration, which is far more burdensome than useful to populations. This incubus (he adds) has been a legacy of the French to Germany.

Under the head of dissolution of religious ideas he remarks:

In some parts of Germany the Christian Church has fallen into a condition of lukewarmness and lethargy of internal discipline which offers a melancholy contrast to the restless activity it displays in its external relations. In other parts the Church has become nothing more than an educational institute.

But the author reserves his most telling blow for the abuses of education. Preparatory education, he says, is not ill furnished in Germany, but it only works on the passive mass in which Revolutions never begin:

In Germany everything centres in studies. Poor day-labourers often deny themselves necessaries in order to see their children go to the Universities. And what are these Universities in the present time? Gothic medieval ruins inconsistent with the institutions and wants of the age in which we live, corporations without fixed type, forming an *imperium in imperio*, they are possessed with a spirit of caste and with an inherited presumption which only serve to bewilder the young and mislead public opinion.

The Universities, archives of all the errors of the age, are ever reproducing and immortalising, so to speak, all false theories, all erroneous and deceptive doctrines, when contemporaries have mostly been undeceived by a painful experience. They are the absolute arbitresses, who determine the future of a nation, and no Government calls them to account either for the matter or the form of their system of doctrine. In a condition of absolute lawlessness, they approach nearer every moment to the abyss of a total dissolution, and if anything yet sustains them it is on the one side the tempting charm of so-called 'academic freedom,' and on the other the singular practice of many German Governments which persist in regarding a University as a finance speculation which gives them the welcome opportunity of attracting money into their country.

In return for this everything is allowed at the Universities. The young, freed from the customary control of laws, plunge into all the excesses which can be suggested by intellectual anarchy and corruption of morals. They begin their career not with the recognition and practice of obedience which alone can teach them properly in time to govern, but at the very age of obedience they learn to allow themselves everything, to try every experiment so as in riper years to be manly, to think nothing sacred, and in case of need to upset everything. The teachers, for their part, trained in the same maxims and the same school, think of nothing in their profession of public instructor but their fees and popularity among their pupils. In such hands theology becomes the adversary of religion, hermeneutic is simply the desecration of holy Writ, medicine presumes in the region of physiology to penetrate with the scalpel of the anatomist into the sanctuary of the soul, and the science of law ends by admitting the right of the stronger. A fundamental reform of the system of education can alone arrest the evil at its source and secure better times for Germany. Multitudes of voices are raised to demand this indispensable reform.

He goes on to demand several alterations, of which the following are the most important:

(1) Suppression of those academical privileges which may have had importance in the middle ages, but are inconsistent with the present condition of states. (2) Substitution of municipal

for academic police. (3) Fixed course of studies, course for each definite vocation.

Then follows an attack on the freedom of journalism.

This pamphlet was important on two accounts. First because it was understood, and soon even avowed, to express the opinion of Alexander; secondly, because of the vast influence over the German mind which the Universities exerted, and their singularly morbid condition at the time. It might well be considered an insult to the nation that a foreign Prince should meddle thus with its internal affairs, and propose in a Congress of Sovereigns to put restrictions upon its liberty. Stein would by natural spirit be inclined to take this view, but as an old statesman of the Holy Roman Empire, he may perhaps have remembered that Germany had long submitted to the influence both of France and Russia, and besides this his relations to Alexander and his sense of the debt which Germany owed to him would dispose him to more patience. He went to Aix-la-Chapelle at Alexander's invitation. Gneisenau had written in June entreating him to use his influence to divert the Czar from the revolutionary schemes he believed him to be meditating. 'Only a voice like yours has a full influence upon him. Living in voluntary retirement you cannot be accused of ambitious views, and you have speech in abundance and can command the most varied expression in the language in which alone the Emperor thinks and writes.' But in fact Alexander was just then exposed to the opposite danger. He was in that phase when a liberal despot discovers that after all

it is his trade to be a king. He showed Stein Stourdza's MS. and asked his opinion of it. Stein answered that there were good things in it, but that it was one-sided and more eloquent than solid, and he went on to argue that whatever might be said against the Press and the Universities the Governments might fairly be charged with having broken their promises, and that the Prussian Government, most forward in promises, had performed nothing, since Hardenberg's visit to the Rhine, so much celebrated, had led to no results. Alexander undertook to speak to the King about it, and said that liberal ideas must be encouraged, but that Governments must take the lead and maintain their reputation. This was his old language, but he who had just dictated Stourdza's pamphlet must have used it with some insincerity.

Stein however does not seem to have sympathised much in the indignation of the scholastic world against Stourdza's attack. He felt with Government rather than with the Universities, and had been for some time past writing and speaking of the Jena Professors almost in the very tone of Stourdza. An unexpected occurrence confirmed him in his unfavourable opinion. Just as when Stein was at Göttingen the enthusiastic students had made a bugbear of Wieland as the corrupter of literature, so, faithful to their traditional ways of thinking, they now treated Kotzebue as the incarnation of all that was evil. His German History had been committed to the flames at the Wartburg festival. And at this moment he appeared as something more mischievous than a sentimentalist or a poetaster. He had been

more than once in his life in Russian employ, and had lately been suspected of acting as a Russian spy upon the Liberal journalists of Germany. Now he announced in his Literary Weekly that Stourdza's pamphlet was to his knowledge official. A theological student at Jena, pupil of those very Professors whom Stourdza may have had principally in view, avenged the cause of the German Universities. Karl Sand was a member of the original Students' Society (Burschenschaft) of Jena, and had been deeply moved by the ceremonies of the Wartburg festival. The exaltation of his mind was perhaps not different from that of Stein's contemporaries at Göttingen nearly half a century before, but it was more dangerous, because it followed so close upon a war in which the young Hamlets of the German Universities had accustomed themselves for the first time to decisive action. He visited Kotzebue at Mannheim on March 23rd, 1819, and plunged a dagger into his heart, exclaiming, 'Take that, you poisoner of souls!' It was not so much perhaps the act as the enthusiastic approval, or at least apology, which it found from scholars and professors of grave character, that showed how morbid was the condition of that strange world, the overgrown and overexcited brain of Germany, which was composed by the Universities. Reaction at once set in decisively, and Hardenberg when he heard the news exclaimed, 'Henceforth a Constitution for Prussia is impossible.'

But Hardenberg was not converted to the reaction himself, and Stein in like manner holds fast the faith that Prussia's safety lies in going forward.

Both statesmen alike must have perceived that such excesses were proofs of the new vitality, as much as of the immaturity, of public spirit; both alike must have been conscious that they could not condemn them too harshly without passing sentence on their own policy of provoking the people to political action. Stein wrote thus to Capodistrias on August 9th:

> Since we parted in last autumn many occurrences have taken place which trouble all the friends of order and legality. Murders elevated to the rank of patriotic actions, crimes caused by the perverse application of noble and venerable principles, heroic exaltation misled to the commission of a deed of shocking perfidy, a conspiracy of the teachers of youth to imbue them with principles destructive of moral, religious, and social order, and to be applied in the most detestable manner—all together is enough to drive to despair those who sincerely desire the welfare of humanity as far as it is possible and attainable in this life.

A sentence which shows how verbosely Stein, usually so sparing of words, can write at times! He goes on:

> It is however to be remarked that the very excess to which the evil has so rapidly risen has hastened the discovery of it as well as the application of antidotes and the possibility of checking its advance, that it excited universal detestation, and that even many writers, such as Steffens at Halle and Menzel at Breslau, have exposed it openly and attacked the principles on which it rests, that general feeling is alarmed at the abyss to which a faction would hurry it, that there begins to be a conviction that the constitutional principles of 1789, which would regenerate everything, are false, and that we must start from a historical point and improve, complete, not overturn.

We have here a kind of avowal of Whiggism; we shall see by what immediately follows that it is

the Whiggism of Lord Grey, not the unprogressive Whiggism of the eighteenth century:

A constitution reared on this basis, at once restoring and improving the past and reviving the genuine original spirit of the institution, will satisfy the great majority, secure the throne by rallying round it the great interests of property and of the real citizens; it will confide to them the discussion and in part the execution of the laws, and assign a fixed and closed area to the wild unrest of bitter agitation that has mastered men's minds.

Nothing shows better the beneficial effect of institutions of this kind in Germany than the history of those which have been created in Bavaria and at Carlsruhe; in spite of the newness of the situation the general result is good, and the effects have either been positively beneficial or promised a better future. Institutions like these, better than the best organised secret police or the most rigorous and watchful control, destroy the influence of the agitators, whether they are interested pamphleteers, fantastic conceited *savants*, or rogues who hope to make profit out of the confusion.

I do hope therefore that the Prussian Government, while making use of the legal means for suppressing disturbance, will at the same time not retrograde but gratify the wishes of a people which gave its ruler proofs of fidelity and boundless devotion in adversity, although the adversity was caused by the counsels of Ministers who had neither seriousness nor principles. The nomination of Humboldt has given much confidence, his principles are known, he has thought much on constitutional questions, the results he has arrived at are sound, and will be beneficial if they are put in practice, provided all is not checked and marred by the impotent pride of some, the timidity or exaggeration of others.

This letter seems really addressed to the Czar, who is expected after reading it to use his influence with Frederick William. It is sufficient to prove how earnestly Stein clung to his reforming views in the time of general reaction. His language is in fact precisely that of Lord Grey. Unfortunately Whiggism of this type began to be unfashionable

in Germany at the very moment that its vogue began in England. Stein wrote thus about the time when it began to be said at Holland House that the moment was come for pressing the question of Parliamentary Reform; but just when reaction drew to an end in England it recovered fresh force in Germany, as indeed might be expected from the general fact pointed out above, that the war-spirit which in England was connected with Conservatism, was in Prussia connected not less closely with Liberalism.

Reaction now comes in with a flood. The period of Reform in Prussia, which began with the Peace of Tilsit, and of which this book has traced the history, nears its end. The transition approaches when Prussia loses her distinguishing mark, that Reform with her is conducted by the Government, and that the people, so far as they interfere in politics at all, are Conservative. Very soon this state too falls into the ordinary groove, and in the next age the Hohenzollerns, like the Habsburgs or the Bourbons, are seen defending themselves against the encroachments of a discontented nation.

> Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher
> Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly dying fire.

But it is not without a struggle that Prussia descends to the lower level. Hardenberg, who never wanted courage, though it seems to have been his principle to make any concession rather than resign his office, was still at the head of affairs, and we find him as late as August 15th writing in quite the old tone to Stein:

Why cannot we work together? I should like to ask your advice on so many subjects and readily acknowledge you as my master in finance, though I am heretic enough to think that healthy common sense is worth more even in this department than the deepest learning. You have been abundantly furnished with the former by our good mother Nature, and you combine the latter with it. This is certainly not common, for I have daily experience that learning is much oftener associated with selfishness and a conceit of infallibility that ruins everything.

But in this very month the deliberations at Carlsbad took place, in which reaction for all Germany and for Prussia among the German states was reduced to a system. The result of them was the creation of a Commission to sit at Mainz, and inquire into the revolutionary agitations and democratic associations which were believed to exist everywhere. This Commission was to be dependent only on the Confederation, to have power to carry on its investigations in every federal state, and even to make arrests throughout Germany and carry off its prisoners to Mainz. At the same time what is now called a Culture War was commenced. As lately the Catholic Church, so in 1819 the Universities were the object of jealousy. The Professors were placed under a strict censorship, and combinations among the students, particularly the Society called the Burschenschaft, were forbidden, while an engagement was taken by each federal state not to give asylum in its Universities to the professors or students expelled from the Universities of another state. All books of less than twenty sheets were subjected to a censorship, and each state was to be responsible to the other states and to the Confederation for any attacks upon their honour or safety which might be made

within its territory. Conferences were appointed to be held among the German Ministers at Vienna, in order to settle the interpretation of the celebrated 13th Article of the Act of Confederation; which Conferences actually took place at the beginning of the next year (1820).

These Resolutions did not indeed reveal for the first time that Germany was no land of liberty, but they were none the less serious and alarming on that account. They brought to light the enormous miscalculation that had been made in the composition of the German Confederation. For what purpose had that Confederation been designed? For the purpose—nothing can be more certain—of strengthening the states of Germany against foreign enemies, and of protecting them against the danger of a new Napoleon. That it would be very difficult to make such a Confederation effective was foreseen from the first. No one was proud of the settlement of Germany made at Vienna, but at the same time it was only for feebleness, for probable ineffectiveness that it was criticised. What came to light at Carlsbad was that, however ineffective it might be for its original object, it was extremely efficient for another object which had never been contemplated. It would never protect the country against foreigners, but it would serve to protect the Sovereigns against their subjects. It appeared now as a powerful League of Monarchs to resist the demands, reasonable or unreasonable, of the active party which the Anti-Napoleonic Revolution had left behind it. Just as the Balance of Germany in the 18th century had been a sort of reflexion in miniature of the Balance

of Europe, so the new German system set up at Vienna reflected that Alliance of the European Sovereigns which is somewhat inaccurately spoken of as the Holy Alliance. Particularly surprising is it to see what authority the Confederation is able to exert over Prussia. Frederick William I. and Frederick the Great had been absolute enough within their own dominions; it had troubled them but little what *conclusa* might pass the Diet at Regensburg. But the Federal Assembly at Frankfurt calls the Prussian Government to account, forbids it to proceed in the path of constitutional reform, and summons its subjects before the tribunal of its Commission of Inquiry at Mainz!

This *coup d'état* was followed by a Ministerial change at Berlin, which is like a fainter reflexion of the fall of Stein in 1808. Frederick William is now oppressed by Metternich and the Confederation as he had then been oppressed by Napoleon. Again he makes concessions and parts with his strongest Ministers. W. v. Humboldt has now to resign and the Wittgenstein party gains the upper hand, Hardenberg effacing himself—and this time for good—as he had been obliged to do for a while at the beginning of 1812. The crisis however was not a very violent one, as indeed it could hardly be, considering the great moderation of Humboldt's opinions and character. He gives the following account of it to Stein, in a letter dated Berlin, March 20th, 1820.

I have refrained from saying to you through the post anything about public affairs or myself so far as I am connected with them. *All our letters are opened*, and even if our letters contain nothing in

itself serious still it is uncomfortable to think that we are read by others. As to my dismissal from the service the only really important thing to say is that it had no definite or single ground (I mean no single quarrel or the like). I have, however, from the moment of my arrival—and I am sure your Excellency will think this quite natural—separated myself from the Chancellor. I cannot help disapproving his manner of administration, and personally he has given me the fairest grounds for complaint.... My reports have often contained criticism on what has been done, though without mention of the Chancellor. Much of this has reached the King.... Beyme and Boyen agreed with me and the Ministers often adopted our views. All this together brought the Chancellor to the conclusion and firm conviction that he or I must give way; he has said this with little disguise and represented it so to the King. This is the plain account of the matter. We three Ministers who agree did no doubt also send in to the King memoirs against the Carlsbad Resolutions, but that was a month before and did not even serve as a pretext for our dismissal.... But I do not doubt that all means are taken to excite suspicion against me in respect of the democratic agitation. Directly indeed this is impossible, since I am never named in the numerous papers that are seized. But as I cannot approve the measures that are taken against the evil, real and great as it certainly is, and as, though I never talk of it in public, I have always said so in the proper place as Minister, this is exaggerated and misconstrued.... I too think that the real and threatening danger is democratical opinions and loosening of the bands of obedience and respect. But against this there is only one radical preventive, justice and wisdom in administration; a Government is never attacked till it exposes vulnerable points itself.... Your Excellency bids me not bury myself too much in antiquity and remember the claims the time still has upon me. I shall never evade them; but at the same time I can never take part in business with the Chancellor again. I have lately seen that he is not indisposed to a reconciliation, but no, in no case! If circumstances should alter some years hence, I shall then be much older, and your Excellency knows my opinion, which I am sure is yours also, that one should not totter straight out of the office into the grave.

If Hardenberg was forced to efface himself the

victory of Reaction could not but affect Stein also. Little as they now cooperated, they were alike opposed to the Reaction, it was their common policy that was now renounced, it was the age which is inscribed with their united names that now comes within sight of its end. It cost us some trouble to ascertain why Stein did not return to public life in 1815, and probably through the four years that followed he continued to look upon public affairs as his province, and both to expect and desire to take office again, for his friend Gagern remarks that he found it difficult to resign himself to private life. But up to 1819 the political atmosphere had been one which he could breathe. Reforms, Constitutions were still talked of, and if the language of alarm was often used this did not in itself offend him, and at times he used it himself. At least it was used freely among his own intimates, as this letter of Humboldt's shows, and it is only when the old irritation is revived by Niebuhr's lugubriousness that he breaks out pettishly, 'I cannot understand this! Herr Niebuhr is always prophesying wild outbreaks of democracy!' or asserts confidently, 'It is an utterly mistaken view to think that the mass of the German population has a democratic tendency; that appears in our *savants*, our pamphleteers, our beardless youths, but nowhere in the people, the noblesse, citizens and peasants[1]. He does not complain of alarms nor even acts of repression, but he has always firmly held to the policy of 1808, so far as to regard Reform as the best antidote against Revolution and the

[1] Stein's Notes (written early in 1819) on Niebuhr's Scheme of Reform.

Government as the legitimate leader in innovation. It was this position which was now abandoned by the Government, and to Stein, who had no talent for effacing himself, the change must have come like an intimation that his public life was probably over.

We hear that at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, November, 1818, Stein, sitting next to Gentz at a dinner-party, confided to him that he was thoroughly sick of politics and should withdraw from them entirely, and that he meant to do something for the original documents of German History. The Reaction had not then decisively triumphed, but doubtless Stein saw that its triumph was at hand, for at that very Congress he had to report to the Czar on Stourdza's pamphlet. Here then we are allowed at last to relax our attention to politics, while we inform ourselves about the last great enterprise which Stein ever undertook, an enterprise in a field in which he had not till then won laurels.

It was always with difficulty that Stein tore himself from politics, and when he did so he always took refuge in history. The sanctuary that was closed to Sir Robert Walpole stood wide open to him. His experience of affairs had not made him sceptical about historical records nor yet indifferent to them. Nay, there seemed always a certain correspondence between the periods of history which he selected for study and the sort of history he had last been making. After his downfall in 1808, and what seemed the final defeat of Europe in 1809, he entered upon a minute study of the French Revolution, as though to inquire 'how first division rose,' or in what way

the destruction of civilisation, as it seemed to him, had been so speedily accomplished.

In his second period of activity he had had his share in a mighty achievement. The German nationality had been raised actually from the dead, and lived and breathed once more with a fresh vigour such as it had seldom known under the old Empire. It was evident that after all Germany was reserved for a great future, and again his mind went to work in the same way. He brooded over the causes of this new phenomenon; he became eager to know in what this too had had its origin, and we can fancy that this inquiry, so full of pride and likely also to be so useful, seized his attention much more strongly than the former one.

It was not, as we have seen, till 1819 that he thought of abandoning public life for these inquiries, but it is certain that he began them in 1815. If the discouraging aspect of German affairs in the latter year decided his resolution, it had been originally inspired by their glorious appearance about the time of Waterloo. Let the reader call to mind the meeting of Stein and Goethe in July, 1815, and their visit to Cologne in company. Then it was, at the highest moment of German fortune, when everything that had ever been done by Germans seemed doubly interesting and important; then it was that, after Stein had entered into Boisserée's enthusiasm for the great German cathedral, and had striven to enlist Goethe's interest in his schemes, he took the poet back to Nassau for the Sunday, and there confided to him that he had a design of collecting and editing the sources of German history. The association of

ideas is easily seen. German history, like Cologne Cathedral, had come to wear quite a new appearance since the series of victories which had just been completed at Waterloo.

It is observable that once before when the prospects of the Fatherland had been for a time unusually bright, the taste for German history had in like manner been awakened. This was in the early part of the 16th century, when under Maximilian the nation had made some approach to unity, and the Humanists were asserting its independence in the field of culture. The works of Tacitus and Velleius were then newly discovered, and the German imagination was full of the name and deeds of Arminius. Emperors in those days paid solemn visits to the tomb of the horned Siegfried at Worms, national poets and historians were brought to light out of the dust of old libraries, and the praises of the Ghibellines as the champions of the nation against the Papacy were zealously celebrated. The Reformation strengthened this feeling, and the middle of the 16th century is the period noted by bibliographers for the first collections of the monuments of German History. But the past lost its brightness again as soon as the clouds began to gather over the present. Now came the refusal of the Emperors to lead the German nationality forward in the paths of evangelical religion; there arose an unexpected complication; the counter-reformation set in, and Germany drifted slowly into the abyss of the Thirty Years War. In the next age the nation, as it gradually recovered from its ruin, was found to have contracted a way of regarding itself unlike the patriotic self-complacency

of other nations, or of itself in happier times. And as it had lost its pride, so it had lost all pleasure in its own history. Beyond local history and the history of separate German states, in which something was done and a Leibnitz, for instance, began a collection of the Antiquities of Brunswick, there was little cultivation of history among the Germans, except as a subdivision of the Faculty of Jurisprudence at the Universities.

In the middle of the 18th century a contempt for the Middle Ages, to which Voltaire gave the most extravagant expression, prevailed in almost every country, but both in France and England there was far more pride in the national achievements, far more historical feeling than in Germany. As the mother country of the Reformation Germany had necessarily a quarrel with the medieval period, and at the same time as the country in which the Reformation had led to the most calamitous results she could take little pleasure in the 16th and 17th centuries. Hence she seems passively to have acquiesced in the fashionable repudiation of the so-called dark ages, and in the belief that in public affairs reason and common sense were the growth of the 18th century, Klopstock can find no materials for patriotic poetry nearer than Arminius. In the popular imagination there lived only some image of Luther and of Frederick the Great.

But such a death and resurrection as Germany had now experienced could not but be followed by a glorification. In 1806 the Holy Roman Empire had ceased to exist. 'Men are we and must grieve

when but the shade of that which once was great is passed away'—and if men could not but do so, how much more Germany! The mourners round the grave of the Empire were the Romantic School; they saw now for the first time all the virtues of the deceased. The Middle Ages had not been 'dark' but grey with a fascinating twilight. In them the arts had grown up under the nurture of religion, under which alone art can live. They were the age of architecture, and if not actually of the greatest painting and poetry, yet of the incubation of both. This time ancient Germany was not praised at the expense of the Papacy, but the Papacy itself was extolled as the master institution of the Middle Ages. Out of this movement therefore came the great conversions, when Count Stolberg, Friedrich Schlegel, Zacharias Werner went over to the Catholic Church.

But I suppose this reaction, caused solely by a sense of loss, would, in the natural course of things, have soon died away and men would have reconciled themselves to the prevalence of the new system but for the wonderful revolution which brought the German nationality back to life in victory and glory. Two sorts of love, the love of the dead and the love of the living, were then blended to form an over-mastering devotion. It is at this second stage that Stein joins hands with the Romantic School.

Stein belonged to the class of society which naturally furnished recruits to Romanticism. Coming from a home which was filled with memories of the old Empire and the old faith, he might not un-

naturally have shared the feelings of Stolberg or La Motte Fouqué. But Romanticism as it was preached by its apostles was not a creed for practical men. In Stein's correspondence we find no echo at all of the sentiments with which the Schlegels and Tieck and Wackenroder and Novalis had filled the literature of the day. No sentimental regrets, no mysticism, no romance! If ever he looks back to the times of the Hohenstauffen, as sometimes he does, it is for the perfectly plain reason that in those days Germany had a more powerful unity than it has had since. And what is more to our immediate purpose, if he conceives an interest in the historical records of the Middle Ages it is not that he may galvanise a dead system, not that he may indulge in any 'Heart-Outpourings of an Artist Monk,' nor even, so far as appears, that he may vindicate the Middle Ages from the misrepresentations to which they have been exposed, but purely —since Germany is evidently destined to a new lease of greatness—that he may lay a solid foundation for German History.

The work he now undertook proved almost as solid and successful as the Emancipating Edict or the Town Ordinance. The Monumenta Germaniae have now been in building for more than fifty years, and their present editor reckons that they will take another half century to complete. They may be considered to have founded the serious study of the Middle Ages for Germany if not for Europe at large, and in doing so to have dissipated for ever that Voltairian misconception of the past which made the study of history in the last century rather

mischievous than useful. They have realised to the full extent his design, and if they have not justified the dreams of the romanticists or exhibited the Middle Ages as a kind of golden age, in these dreams it does not appear that he had ever any share.

It ought not to be overlooked that Stein did not even now belie the strictly practical tendency of his whole life. This scientific undertaking grew out of a practical difficulty which had encountered him in trying to perform his duty, and it is observable that the case had been closely similar in 1809, when he entered upon the former studious period of his life. At that time he was educating his daughter Henriette, and as she was apparently to pass her life in servitude under the dominion of Napoleon it was essential that she should know the history of the French Revolution, out of which had sprung the power which had ruined her country. In 1815 Therese was old enough to study history; out of her girl-friends a little class was formed at Nassau; and as it was now happily certain that their lives were to be passed in the bosom of a great and independent nation the history of Germany was naturally the subject selected. The teacher of this class was indeed no professional schoolmaster or professor; Stein himself, in consideration that he was Therese's father, would venture to become a historical lecturer, and these girls would hear the growth of Germany explained by the old Imperial Knight, a representative by his very birth of a thousand years of German history and himself in addition the regenerator of the Prussian Monarchy and the founder of

the doctrine of German unity. But considering the presumption involved in assuming this part Stein intended to spare no pains in the preparation of his lectures. He applied to booksellers in Frankfurt and Stuttgard, he applied personally to historians. But Therese should not be put off with second-hand information. He went to the original sources, and then he discovered what several *savants* of the eighteenth century (for instance the theologian Semler) had already remarked with regret, that what had been done for Italy by Muratori and for France by the Congregation of St. Maur had not yet been done for Germany. True, a greater than Muratori or than Dom Bouquet had arisen in Germany about the same time to do the same work. Leibnitz himself had formed the plan of publishing the original documents, *ut praesens aetas thesaurum quendam relinquat:* this work he said would be much more useful than a history written *stylo eleganti et florido.* He had himself published (1707—1711) *Scriptores Rerum Brunswicensium,* and out of his collections the *Origines Guelficae* had been later compiled by others (Ekkard, Hahn, Jung, Gruber, Scheidt); he had also produced the Annales Imperii Occidentis, covering the period from 768—1005, and pronounced by a good authority to be 'a masterwork which leaves all earlier performances far behind it.' But the divisions of Germany, the impossibility of raising money or procuring effective co-operation for any national purpose, had prevented Leibnitz from adding to his other laurels that of being the legislator for the department of history and at the same time Germany of the honour of taking the lead

of all nations in this department. In spite of Leibnitz she was now behind and not before France and Italy. His Annales Imperii Occidentis actually remained unpublished until they were presented to the world (1843—1846) by no other than Stein's biographer and the Editor of the Monumenta Germaniae, Pertz.

How then shall Therese learn the history of her country? Here we have the motive which led Stein to set in motion again his redoubtable organising talent and to summon all the learning of Germany to a vast work of research which will probably occupy a century. He writes to the Bishop of Hildesheim (date not given):

> Since my retirement from public affairs I have been animated by the wish to awaken the taste for German history, to facilitate the fundamental study of it, and so to contribute to keep alive a love for our common country and for the memory of our great ancestors. It was also my purpose to endeavour that the multitude of documents dispersed by the revolution of the year 1803 might be carefully collected and preserved from destruction; this however depends principally upon measures taken by the Governments and cannot be accomplished by the determination of individuals. But it is within the power of a society of private lovers of their country and its history to bring into existence a convenient collection of original authorities, and to collect a fund to pay the learned men who may devote their time and strength to the enterprise, and in this way to put the collection complete and cheap into the hands of the student of history.

I trust that in the course of this long biography the reader has learnt gradually to feel the grave and powerful simplicity which is Stein's main characteristic. If so I need not pause to comment on what I have just related. It affords a glimpse into

an educational method which will one day perhaps be better appreciated than it is now. That little class of girls in the room at Nassau listening to the old statesman's lectures on German history! And we are told that each hour he examined them in the matter of the last lecture.

This statesman has struggled in past days against bureaucracy in the State; now he is casting the weight of his example against bureaucracy in education. Compare the teaching of history by a paid schoolmaster without either experience of practical politics or leisure for fundamental study to the instruction of a father, who is not content with his own vast experience and 'a knowledge of history such as few professors could boast,' but excuses himself no trouble even though he is told that the means of acquiring trustworthy information do not exist. It reminds us of Chatham instructing his son, of the old Roman senators followed by their sons into the forum or the senate-house. Yet even they bestowed this care only upon sons. It is for a daughter that Stein devotes himself!

Between the first conception of the undertaking in 1815 and the disappointment of Stein's political hopes in 1819 the plan had not assumed any very definitive shape. In the summer of 1816 he had laid it before the learned world of Berlin who had welcomed it enthusiastically, but in their eagerness to secure the honour of it to Prussia had proceeded with such haste, drawing up their scheme and submitting it at once to Hardenberg without even waiting for Stein's approval, that they had defeated their own object, for Hardenberg had not been induced

to regard the matter seriously. In the course of 1818 some first steps were taken. Stein sketched the plan of a society; a secretary was found in Büchler, an official of Baden, and the more important choice of an editor was also made. A certain Dümge, also of Baden, who had edited the heroic poem Ligurinus, about the genuineness of which there has since been so much dispute, was the person chosen. Some subscriptions also were promised, Stein heading the list with 3000 florins, a sum twice as large as was subscribed by any one else. But the year of reaction 1819 must be considered as the birth year of the Society. On January 20th Stein called a meeting of all interested at his house at Frankfurt, and at this meeting after an address from Stein the Society was formed, the appointments of Büchler and Dümge as Secretary and Editor ratified, and the celebrated motto of the Society chosen by Stein at the suggestion of Büchler. The significance of its words, *Sanctus amor patriae dat animum*, can hardly be understood but by those who have observed how new and fresh was the feeling of patriotism at that time in German breasts. The spring of the same year brought another occurrence which probably in the end ensured the success of the enterprise. The answers of the scholars whose assistance had been requested were now coming in. Schlosser, Rühs, Wilken, Dahlmann, Voigt gave their names, Dahlmann remarking 'If your Excellency should at last, after so many have tried it, succeed in educating to faithful cooperation in a public cause the obstinate isolation of German authorship, posterity will assuredly be just enough

to value this much higher than the work which is the result.' But among the letters which came was one which ran as follows—it was addressed to Büchler:

It was with the liveliest joy that I received through your kind communication intelligence of the formation of the Society for collecting the sources of the medieval history of Germany. The great prospect which it opens for the history and life of our nation must be the strongest incentive to every one to contribute what he can to realise that prospect, so that advantage may be taken of those favourable circumstances which we have waited for so long, and it may not be said that the *savants* alone of Germany have remained uninfluenced by the great days that have passed over us. Your flattering confidence shows me the way to participate in the work, and I feel bound to enter upon it. I should like, if other considerations do not interfere, to edit a part of the Documents of the Carolingian period, particularly those of them which with the Collections of Laws and the Charters are the real foundation of the Carolingian History, and at the same time require to be investigated together, the Annales Nazariani, Tiliani, Petaviani, Fuldenses, Moissiacenses, Bertiniani, Mettenses, Eginhardi, and of the biographies those of Eginhard, Thegan, Nithard and the Lives of S. Boniface, S. Wala, Adhalard, in the Acta Sanctorum. If you should find it possible to entrust to me these, or according to the number of collaborators and the length of time allowed for the accomplishment of the enterprise—fewer or more of the historians of that period, I should be able to send in at once an exact catalogue.

With this business-like proposal enters into Stein's biography the most important of the men who may be said to have formed his youngest school, his biographer and the future Editor of the Monumenta Germaniae, G. H. Pertz. Assuredly it is an eminent name. Stein himself emphatically pronounced that the merit of the success—such success as he lived to see—of the Monumenta be-

longed solely to Pertz, and he would accept for himself only the praise of having given the first impulse. A similar sentence is pronounced by the highest authority now living, Dr G. Waitz, who writes, 'In tracing the history of the Society for Early German History it is impossible not to recognize that it was a great gain when Pertz undertook the scientific guidance of the whole. Then first came unity and definite plan into endeavours which till then had been desultory and had taken the most conflicting directions.' It might be honour enough for one man to have guided successfully one of the greatest scientific enterprises ever undertaken, but Pertz has had the additional honour of producing in his Life of Stein the most important single work on another and a profoundly interesting period of German History.

Though this year saw Pertz enrolled among the active members of the Society, two more years passed before he rose to the supreme direction of it. It was not till April 12th, 1822, that Stein did to Pertz what Frederick William III. for very similar reasons had done to himself in 1807, and created him dictator. He then wrote:

Nothing is left but to commit the business to a man of sound learning, who, like another Muratori or Mabillon, will make it the serious business of a part of his life to edit the original authorities, and in special cases to get the help of other *savants* as much as possible. Dümge in spite of his learning is quite incompetent to such an undertaking, through his narrowness, quarrelsomeness and want of tact, he will limit himself to the editing of single writers of one period, and has for the present declared himself willing to undertake the Hohenstauffen period. In fact he is

incapacitated for undertaking a whole period by want of a correct judgment to guide him in the selection of the authorities.

Providence seems to have chosen *you* to carry out this enterprise, which supplies a serious want of our historical literature and will give you a claim to the gratitude of all Germany. You combine many qualifications for the work, inclination, earlier studies, two years' residence in Vienna and Rome, manifold connexions, neighbourhood and use of the libraries of Hannover, Göttingen, Wolfenbüttel, neighbourhood of the *savants* of those places and facility of resorting to their advice.

The first meeting of Stein and his future biographer took place in 1820, and is described at length by the latter. On December 21st, 1819, Stein had written to him thus:

You are known to me as a thorough investigator through your treatise on the Frankish Mayors of the Palace, and therefore it was with the greater pleasure that I received your announcement that you wished to undertake the editing of the writers of the Carolingian period. But it is necessary in such a critical edition to use the MSS. that are found in Germany, and of these particularly a great number is to be found in the Vienna library. I therefore propose that you should make up your mind to take up your residence in Vienna in order to use and inquire into the MSS. which are there in the Imperial Library, the Society paying your expenses, and that you should return a definite answer to this proposal.

Pertz replied on the 27th with a grateful acceptance, and the affair brought him to Nassau on April 28th, 1820. The first meeting of a great man with his biographer is always interesting, and therefore I extract most of Pertz' description:

Through Cassel, Giessen, and Wetzlar I reached Limburg on the 27th, then in the early morning along the forest road through

Dietz and Holzapfel by the nobly situated Convent of Arnstein and the vineyards of the Lahn valley to Nassau. I stopped at the Red Lion and announced my arrival by a note to the Minister. It was the time of his bath; he appointed 11 o'clock to see me and at the same time invited me to dinner. I went with a beating heart. I was conducted through several rooms adorned with pictures into the tower. There he sat in the chair by the writing-desk, great brow and nose, eyes bright and fine, cordiality in every feature. I was beckoned to a chair. I said, 'It is one of the happiest days of my life when I am permitted personally to express to your Excellency my veneration,' and produced the letters I had brought. 'Have you got my letters?' he asked; 'I sent them to Büchler by H. v. Anstetten with orders upon Hannover and Vienna.' I said, 'No.' 'Then when did you set out from Hannover?' 'On the evening of the 23rd.' 'My letter is of the 12th.' He read out copies of them, and then began upon the Carolingian writers. 'The Catalogues we have had yet will not do,' he said, and then explained how he meant to get complete catalogues by societies for each period, and showed how my residence at Vienna would have the double object of consulting the MSS. and of inducing the *savants* of the place to form a close association for the time of the Suabian Emperors and Rudolf of Habsburg. While he presented the idea of the undertaking, that of awakening patriotism through a knowledge of the national history, he expressed himself about persons and things with the greatest openness, and after initiating me thus quickly into the situation of affairs and my own position he closed by saying, 'I have had a room prepared for you here in the house; send for your luggage.'... At dinner his youngest daughter appeared. He asked after Rehberg, after the Hannoverian Constitution; I gave ready, quick, and precise answers, and when the conversation passed to the separate features of it, he remarked with respect to the communal system, 'Communes are either slavish or free: centralise, paralyse.' We spoke of the financial system, the land-tax, substitution in the Hannoverian Landwehr, the question of publicity of deliberations. After dinner we went into the garden, then out into the road, where the apple-trees were in full blossom, then on under the Nassau and the Stein to his farmhouse: he expressed a wish that I would edit the Merovingian as well as the Carolingian authors. I consented, and at the same time made

further inquiries about the persons and relations with which I should have to do. He made no secret that he expected nothing of Dümge. We spoke of extending the scheme to the Laws and important charters: I urged it strongly, he was already in favour of it.... Returning from our walk we went into the tower again... At tea Fraülein Henriette also appeared; I had brought a letter to her from her aunt Kielmansegge; the conversation turned again on me and my presence. When the time of parting approached Stein made arrangements for helping me forward with my journey, gave me a letter to Büchler, and we parted in perfect mutual understanding.

This description shows that Stein's share in the great undertaking was by no means strictly confined to giving the first impulse, if by that expression be meant recommending it and helping it with money. It is plain that he entered into every detail and at least at that early stage settled every detail. Two years later no doubt Pertz had grown over his patron's head, and assumed from that time the direction of the undertaking. The description also gives us a specimen of Pertz' manner as a biographer. He was well qualified so far as industry and accuracy in the editing of documents are important qualifications in the biographer of a statesman. But he brings no special biographical aptitude to the task. As in this description he notes nothing either in Stein's appearance or conversation which would not equally have been noted by any other observer, so throughout his biography there is the same want of original observation. He collects the remarks which have been made by others upon Stein, but has scarcely any remarks of his own to offer. Stein scarcely seems to have *sat* to him. It is indeed not surprising that one who had the

weight of the Monumenta Germaniae upon him should want the freedom of mind necessary to make at the same time a first-rate biographer.

The description suggests something else. We miss one figure in the family group. That year 1819 had changed much in Stein's life. It closed the period of triumph which had opened in 1815. Nor did it only bring the disappointment of hopes for Germany and the world and of prospects of further political achievement for Stein himself. It warned him also more feelingly of the arrival of the winter season, and showed him that the grand deliverance of 1815 had rescued for himself not life but only the remains of life, had saved him from the tempest only to throw him on the flat and featureless shore of old age. In 1809 Stein had quoted that passage in Schiller's Bell where the ruined man thanks Heaven that no dear head is missing in his family. But in 1819 he heard in due course the funeral knell, and might have quoted again,

> Ach! die Gattin ist's, die theure,
> Ach es ist die treue Mutter.

Frau vom Stein died on September 15th, 1819, at Nassau, in her 47th year. Her husband had been absent at Cappenberg and wrote from thence on August 30, 'I shall not leave Cappenberg before the end of September.' His wife had been for some years an invalid, and had this summer a violent attack of dysentery. Marianne was with her, besides her daughters, and their reports were so reassuring that on September 11th Stein still writes that he hopes to be in Nassau in the first days of October.

But a second message reported a sudden change, and he had only time to receive her last words and to see her die.

He drew up a slight sketch of her life, which he caused to be printed at Frankfurt. Some sentences have been quoted from it above. It seems inspired by two feelings, first, a bitter sense of the trials which he had brought upon her by associating her with such a troubled lot as his own, secondly, gratitude to her for having allowed him to be patriotic and self-sacrificing when—so our knowledge of his early disappointment in her allows us to interpret his expressions—her want of public feelings might easily have led her to try to drag him down. He goes through the whole series of trials which had fallen upon her, and which he believes had undermined her health. No sooner had she entered on her married life than she had to flee before the French and return to her father's house, while her husband went to the Prussian head-quarters. The Peace of Basel did not save the property at Nassau from plunder. Jena drove her from 'a position at Berlin which she greatly enjoyed.' Her husband's first dismissal occurred at a moment when the little Therese seemed at the point of death. This led to a journey of 150 German miles through country occupied by the enemy, and at the same time she lost a considerable part of her property (I suppose by the conquest of Hannover). No sooner had she reached Nassau than her husband was seized with dangerous illness, and before he was fully recovered he left her for an absence of 13 months. No sooner were they re-united at the end of 1808 than the

stroke of Napoleon's proscription fell, the husband was an outlaw, and the wife followed him into banishment. Even here she could not enjoy quiet. They were driven in 1809 from Brünn to Troppau. New separation and new dangers began in 1812, and when next she saw her husband he was lying on a sick-bed at the Hotel zum Zepter at Breslau.

This is indeed a melancholy narration, and if we add, what seems hinted, that she had with respect to public affairs only the common notions prevalent among her caste in Germany, we can understand the reflexion with which Stein concludes, and acknowledge that it is not exaggerated:

> Had she been selfish or deaf to the dictate of duty and the voice of conscience she could have separated her fate from that of her husband, or in the various crises which she lived through with him, she might have counselled a contemptible submission or a cowardly avoidance of new dangers. But she remained true to duty, trusting in God, and obeying the maxim selected by her in the time of misfortune and engraved on one of her rings, *Bear and Forbear*.
>
> 'She has fought a good fight, she has finished her course, she has kept the faith.'

Henceforth our narrative must move faster. It is true that eleven years still remain to be traversed, a period as long as that between 1804 and 1815, into which all Stein's great achievements had been crowded. But he does not again accomplish anything memorable, and English readers cannot be expected to interest themselves in mere correspondence, about persons and things mostly strange to them. It may surprise us that a statesman's public life should thus come to an end in his 63rd year,

when his health is still strong and his energy and ambition unimpaired. Had Stein been an English statesman we should have had to tell of many speeches in the House of Lords, and probably after a few years of a return to office. It is otherwise in a country without a Parliament, where ministries are less often changed, and where only officials have any share in practical politics. Nevertheless, as we shall see, Stein does not yet quite lose the hope of a change of affairs which may be favourable to him.

Since the opening of this book I have not had to tell of a pleasure tour taken by Stein. In his youth he had lounged, as he himself confesses, about Vienna when Maria Theresa was reigning; since then, though he had travelled a good deal, he had never travelled for pleasure. He was now led for the health of Henriette, which caused him anxiety after her mother's death, to make a tour in Switzerland and Italy, which occupied him nearly a year between July, 1820, and June, 1821. Geneva was his first object, where he was to consult the physician Butigny. In the Swiss towns which he passed through, *e.g.* Constanz and St Gallen, his eyes were open to see that which had now begun to interest him more than anything else, medieval manuscripts. But he also visited distinguished men, observed the social and economical condition of the people, and deeply enjoyed the scenery. In speaking of the Genevese *savants*, Sismondi, Pictet, &c., he remarks that a young Italian jurist has recently come among them, a man full of intelligence and learning, Rossi; this is the unfortunate Papal Minister murdered in 1848. He also remarks that

at Geneva even the ladies attend *cours de lecture*, and adds, 'this makes their society agreeable.' Henriette's health soon improves, and the rest of the party is well, each member in his own way, 'and the member who is 17 has one way, the member who is 63 another.' At the end of the summer he crossed the Simplon to Milan, and saw Italy for the first time. In Italian society, he remarks that 'political ideas are now predominant, liberation from the rule of foreigners, league of Italian states, or *unity of Italy*,—these are the ideas which exclusively rivet and attract the attention of the educated class.' And what does he think of this idea of the unity of Italy, which might remind him of his own favourite idea of the unity of Germany? 'How is it possible,' he asks, 'for a problem which has remained unsolved since the fall of the Roman Empire to be solved in the present circumstances? To me it seems nothing but the play of an excited imagination.'

That was indeed a critical time in European History which Stein passed in a country where the crisis was peculiarly violent. In January of 1820 Revolution had begun in Spain, and in August the infection had spread to Naples. In the late autumn met the Congress of Troppau, and in the Circular Despatch of December 8th principles were announced by Russia, Austria, and Prussia, which have come to be known by the name of the earlier Holy Alliance. The principle of Intervention was solemnly adopted. In the beginning of 1821 the Congress moved to Laibach, and in March the intervention in Naples took place. In the same

month the military insurrection broke out in Piedmont, and this was crushed by the help of Austria in the month of April. The Declaration of the three Sovereigns, dated from Laibach, was written by Stein's old comrade Pozzo di Borgo, and announced in loftier tones than ever the mission of the Great Powers to preserve Europe from anarchy, and the right of Governments to reserve to themselves the initiative in all reform. Most of these occurrences Stein watched from Rome, where he arrived in the middle of December, 1820, and remained till May 4th, 1821, making a short excursion to Naples in April. He must have watched them, not merely with the feelings of a politician, but with a closer interest, for his brother-in-law Count Walmoden commanded one wing of the Austrian army that marched to Naples.

Except some vague feelings of indignation against the Holy Alliance, this remarkable convulsion of Southern Europe has left little impression upon our minds. It was a sort of repetition of the events of 1789, occurring this time in the two Bourbon Kingdoms which had not shared in the former Revolution, and ending as that might have ended if the policy of Pillnitz had been seriously meant and resolutely carried out. 'See now,' Metternich is said to have exclaimed to Alexander, 'what revolutions are when they are taken in time!' The resemblance is particularly striking in Spain, where the Bourbon accepts the Constitution just as Louis XVI. had done, but with an adroitness and a perfidy of which Louis was incapable gives it line, waits for reaction, and when the movement has disappointed one

section of the nation and irritated another, throws himself into the arms of the foreigner. Scarcely any evidence remains to show with what sympathies Stein watched the conflict. Pertz remarks only that he 'followed it with keen attention, but without expecting good results from the doings of secret societies, of Carbonari.' We are to remember that that alliance of Sovereigns which had now taken such a formidable shape was in a great degree the creation of his own energetic exertions at the beginning of 1813, and that one of the most conspicuous members of it, the Czar, was his benefactor, while he had fought all his life against the French Revolution, which seemed reproduced in all its wildness in these Southern movements. At the same time the Alliance, as the German Confederation had done, now took another character, and Metternich was the soul of the new Coalition of Governments. Alexander had been converted by Metternich, and the interventions in Southern Europe corresponded closely with the policy of the Carlsbad Resolutions and the Vienna Conferences which had made German politics insufferable to Stein. Probably, therefore, he did not much approve of the Declarations of Troppau and Laibach. It is not likely however that he had the least sympathy with the revolutionary party. He had always justified his Liberalism in German politics by laying it down that the Germans were a peaceable, rational, moral and religious people. For this reason and for this reason only, he had recommended bold reforms and large concessions of liberty to the Germans. I fear he had not the same opinion of the Italians, nor probably of the Spaniards. It is

indeed likely enough that he thought too meanly of their qualifications for liberty, for of all virtues Stein had the least tincture of those which are cosmopolitan.

Another influence was at work which may probably have prejudiced him against the revolutionary cause. He renewed at Rome his acquaintance with Niebuhr, who was residing there as Prussian Ambassador, and who, at the time when Stein left again for Germany, was on the point of bringing to a close those important negotiations which resulted in the reorganization of the Catholic Church in Prussia by the Bull De Salute Animarum (July, 1821). When we last saw Stein and Niebuhr together they found each other's society insufferable. But there had been no definite ground of quarrel; they had been sundered only by incompatibility of temper; accordingly when they met again after an interval of more than seven years, Niebuhr, who had looked forward to the meeting with much perturbation, was relieved to find his old chief all cordiality and affection. It cannot be said that a reconciliation took place; perhaps the truth is that Stein, much less thin-skinned and self-conscious than his friend, had never been aware of any quarrel. Henceforth their old intimacy and correspondence begins again as though it had never been interrupted. But I think it would have been soon interrupted again if Stein had betrayed much sympathy with the Italian and Spanish movements. In those movements Niebuhr's bugbear of Revolution took a form which really almost justified his chronic dread of a return of barbarism through anarchy. It is well known with what anxious energy he furthered and encouraged the

Austrian intervention. His mind was full of the subject, and his position gave him the means of gaining the fullest information. Stein on the other hand had never taken much interest in foreign politics except when the cause of German independence required him to do so; and now all politics had become to him of secondary interest; his mind ran on medieval MSS.; and it is easy therefore to imagine that he allowed his friend to declaim against the monstrous proceedings of Pepe and Riego without interruption. But in his correspondence scarcely any allusion to the subject is to be found.

At Rome he spent much time in society for the sake of his daughters, since Therese, who had her mother's beauty,—while Henriette rather resembled her father—was just out. Of society Stein soon grew weary, and he had already set his face determinedly towards Germany, when the importunities of the same Therese prevailed upon him to make a flying visit to Naples, where General Walmoden was able to provide quarters for them. When at last in May he recrossed the Alps by Venice and the Tirol he left behind a strong impression stamped upon the mind of a young observer whose opinions have an interest for the present generation, and even more in England than in Germany. In the biography of Bunsen we read as follows:

> The period that followed was one of vigorous health, and the winter and spring of 1821—22 are marked in my memory as peculiarly calm and cheerful owing to the health and happy activity on the part of Bunsen. He was less drawn into society than had been the case in the winter of 1819—20, when the presence of

the deservedly celebrated Baron vom Stein called upon him for a sacrifice of time willingly made, though considerable, in order to show him the objects of interest in Rome, thus giving him an opportunity of important intercourse. Stein was well aware of the value of these conversations to his young friend and therefore urged his coming to him for hours together day after day. With reference to these friendly invitations Bunsen once made the remark that he could not have given way so regularly and constantly to the demands of Stein upon his time had he not felt the man to be his King. This testimony to the inbred royalty of Stein's nature he never gave to any other individual of whatsoever station.

Bunsen never saw Stein again, yet, as we remember, it was at his instigation that Arndt, near forty years later, wrote down his reminiscences of Stein; and on his death-bed, in reviewing his past life, Bunsen was heard to couple with the name of his old chief that of this King, with whom he had had so little intercourse. 'Thanks,' he said, 'to Niebuhr, to Stein.'

I cannot explain the confusion of dates which occurs in the passage just quoted. The reader will have remarked that it was not in the winter of 1819—20, but actually in the winter of 1820—21, which is noted as all the quieter for Stein's absence, that Stein was in Rome.

The renewed intercourse with Niebuhr remained as a permanent result of this tour. Niebuhr's old feeling of loyalty revived with as much enthusiasm as ever, and the following sentences, written in August, 1821, repeat almost verbally the sentiments which he had expressed in 1806. After speaking of 'the indescribably refreshing effect which Stein's visit had had upon his weary and withered heart,' he says, 'Thank God I have not lost the yearning of a youth

intellectually sound towards men to whom one can look up and whom one can fear with reverence, and hope to preserve it even in old age, if I live to old age! Too long have I wanted an object like you, and assuredly I shall continue to want it till I see you again.' And with the old enthusiasm revives the old querulousness, the old self-consciousness, and particularly the old frenzy against Hardenberg, which he could now indulge without much fear of Stein's disapproval. This part of Hardenberg's life has not yet been satisfactorily written, and it would be very rash to express an opinion upon his behaviour towards the Reaction which triumphed in 1819. But he had certainly drifted into a false position like that of Chatham in 1766, and since he would not resign could scarcely complain if even the most candid observers now abandoned his cause. Stein now speaks of him with as little forbearance as Niebuhr, and this seems to be what is meant when it is asserted that he now acknowledged Niebuhr to have been right in the old dispute of 1810. When the negotiations with the Pope were on the point of being concluded by Niebuhr, Hardenberg came from Laibach to Rome to appropriate not only the credit of them but—according to Niebuhr's friends—even the presents, worth 20,000 scudi, which on such an occasion would naturally have fallen to the Ambassador.

This evening, writes Niebuhr on March 23rd, we have had the appointed conference with the Chancellor,—Cardinal Consalvi and I,—and all is settled. The Cardinal had had the points of my last note extracted, and proposed the answers which I had agreed on with his Secretary. Hardenberg said Yes,

without knowing what the matter was... Hardenberg always says 'Yes' because 'No' must have some sort of reason.

And later,

The King has ratified in a Cabinet Order sent me by Hardenberg the results of the negotiation concluded by the Chancellor of State during his visit to Rome... As to any expression of the King's satisfaction with one so insignificant as I am, though the Cabinet used to instruct the Ministers to convey this to an Ambassador, and though a sincere Royalist would value it much and put up with a good deal for the sake of it, that is so much out of the question that his Majesty or his Majesty's draughtsman is entirely unaware that any one but the Chancellor had anything to do with the business, or at least had laboured to any purpose in it.

Soon after his return to Germany, Stein himself was drawn into a new controversy with Hardenberg by the circumstances of the Westphalian Province. Two questions were at issue, first the legal existence of the Estates of the County Mark, secondly the conditions of the abolition of serfdom in the lands between the Rhine and the Elbe. On the first question, which was raised by Hardenberg's refusal on September 15th to recognize, even provisionally pending other arrangements, the existence of the Estates of the County, Stein, being consulted by some of the representatives, wrote on October 6th a paper strongly supporting the claims of the Estates. It is important as expressing a repugnance to bureaucracy which he seems about this time to have felt much more intensely than in his earlier life. After describing the old functions of the Estates and appealing to the experience he had himself had more than thirty years before of their utility, after asserting the just claim of the County to see them restored, he protests against the alterna-

tive form of Government by saying, 'In place of this enduring and protective institution we have a hierarchy of officials, meddling in everything, settling everything, expensive, tapering to a point in the Chancellorship of State and trebling the cost of administration as it was in 1806.' He is however still polite enough towards Hardenberg to say, 'I have reason to think that the Chancellor of State wishes for a Constitution both provincial and central and seeks to maintain it, but that he finds many difficulties in the way of attaining his object.' How much just at this time Stein was impressed with the evils of bureaucracy, which while the promise of a Constitution remained unfulfilled was settling down with a leaden weight, may be seen from the following sentences, the most emphatic he ever wrote on the subject, which occur in a letter to Gagern dated August 24th. Gagern had written mainly on the Greek question and had closed his letter with the words, '*He* is no more! Sic transit gloria mundi! And you? and your relations to him?' Stein answers, maintaining a complete silence on his relations to Napoleon, as follows:

My Westphalian friends who visit me are more interested in the consequences of the new class tax that has been given us, and the Edict on the position of the peasantry, which contents neither peasants nor landlords, than with the great events on the Danube and in the valleys of Greece... Hence you see that I have not much to say on the events of the day except that I have little confidence in those who control them directly, but an unlimited confidence in Providence, that I expect nothing even from the Constitution, necessary to Prussia and beneficial as it may be, while the King's courtiers and the influences of the Austrian Court counteract it, and as to our continuing to be ruled

by bureaucrats, *salaried, book-learned, without interests and without property*—that will last while it lasts! These four words express the spirit of our soulless government-machine and of others like it; *salaried*, that means a tendency to maintain and increase the number of the salaried; *book-learned*, that is, living in the world of words not of realities; *without interests*, for they are not connected with any of the classes of citizens that make up the State, but are a caste by themselves, the caste of writers; *without property*, that means that all the movements of property leave them unaffected, whether it is rain or sunshine, whether taxes rise or fall, whether old traditional rights are abolished or maintained, whether all the peasants are transformed in virtue of a theory into hired labourers, and for serfdom to the landlord there is substituted serfdom to the Jews and the money-lenders. All this does not concern them, while they draw their salary out of the Treasury and sit writing, writing, writing, unknown, unnoticed, unhonoured, in quiet office with a good lock to it, and bring up their children after them to be equally expert writing-machines.

One machinery, the military one, I saw fall in 1806, on the 14th of October, and I should not wonder if the writing machinery has its 14th of October too!

The last phase of Hardenberg's long regime was now approaching. In a step which was taken at this time towards a settlement of the question of Provincial Estates the King passed him by altogether, appointing a new Committee with the Crown Prince as President, and Voss, Ancillon, Vincke as principal members. The old Minister Voss now comes again into the foreground, and the Chancellor's influence begins to be confined once more within the Foreign Department. The new Committee summoned deputies from each province to Berlin for deliberation. No name would occur so soon as Stein's when the choice of deputies for the Province of Westphalia came under consideration, but his old rival Voss was apparently not particularly

eager to see him again, and the tone of the official world in general was not at this time such that they would gladly hear him at Berlin on the question of a parliamentary Constitution. The well-known differences between Stein and Wittgenstein and the Chancellor were made a pretext for not summoning him, though as a matter of fact both Hardenberg and Wittgenstein were to accompany the King to the Congress of Verona, which met in the autumn. To atone for the appearance of disrespect which this pretermission wore, it was determined that the Crown Prince should ask him to give his opinion in writing, and accordingly on October 30th, 1822, Stein received the following letter:

Dear Minister,

It is with great joy that I write to you to-day for the first time in my life, and at the same time with great expectations, for if you give a good reception to these lines and to what accompanies them, I hope to receive from you a most particular, weighty, and momentous answer.

You will no doubt guess, venerable Baron, that I speak of that question of Estates which the King has been graciously pleased to entrust to a Commission under my presidency; for you must be thoroughly conscious that such a matter cannot be settled in Prussian lands without your voice. I was therefore much pleased to receive the King's commission to write to you, to communicate to you our principles and views and ask you to communicate yours and to advise us. For this purpose Ancillon and H. v. Schönberg have at my desire drawn up the enclosed papers. Ancillon's paper contains our principles and their application in general. H. v. Schönberg's paper on the other hand deals principally with the negotiations which are to begin at the beginning of next month with deputies summoned from the Westphalian province. It includes the questions we shall lay before them accompanied with a humble attempt to answer them on the part of the Commission. You are not, my dear Minister, to consider this answer

as anything but an *attempt* to apply our principles. It is mainly your answers to the questions that we expect from you.

The commission which our Committee has received from the King does not extend beyond the Provincial Estates, and therefore the official part of this letter must not transcend that limit. But as after all I may write what I like to you, I will add a request in my own name. Do have the goodness to take the opportunity of communicating your views on future Estates General of the Prussian Monarchy, their form, their size, their composition, and particularly upon the time when they should be organised. On the question whether it is advisable to bring them into operation at the same time with the Provincial Estates, or immediately after the completion of the Provincial Constitutions, or not till we have some assurance about the working of these—on this question I have scarcely heard two judgments that agree. Your grand sterling way of thinking, exalted above all party spirit and consequently honoured with the hatred of all parties alike, assures me of receiving to this question too an answer which will gladden my heart.

The few short moments that I saw and spoke with you last summer are precious in my remembrance. I have not forgotten the promise I then gave you, of serving you here, as far as possible, in your researches into original German documents. But you must yourself set me to work by applying for the communication of such documents as you know or suppose to exist in our archives. I will then honestly do my part: but the result will depend not so much on my good will as on that of others.

And now farewell, dear Minister. I shall await your answer with the greatest eagerness. I earnestly beg to be held in your friendly remembrance. Receive the assurance of my highest esteem and my true friendship.

FRIEDRICH WILHELM, Crown Prince of Prussia.

On the receipt of this letter Stein proceeded at once, with all due diligence, to compose a pamphlet on Provincial Estates. But as we are bidding farewell to Stein as a politician we need not plunge again into the consideration of his views on this

subject, particularly as he himself remarks, in a letter to Gneisenau, written in 1829, that 'it was almost entirely disregarded.' His answer to the letter of the Crown Prince, however, must not be omitted.

In the remarks which I have humbly submitted to Your Royal Highness I have laid before you frankly and conscientiously my views on the conditions of an effective and practical Constitution such as will answer its object. If it is intended that the Provincial Estates shall answer their object, rights must be conceded to the corporation that may put it in a condition to attain its object; if the whole work is intended for show like the Austrian Estates, it would be better that we should be spared the farce, which deceives no one and only excites bitterness and disgust. A wise, religious-moral Monarch, surrounded with a numerous, flourishing, noble and intelligent family, may trust a gallant, faithful and considerate people that has evidenced these virtues by sacrifices of every kind and by streams of blood which it shed joyfully for throne and country; in its heart is hidden neither treason nor rebellion.

Follies of misled individuals, which in their very beginnings were favoured by the Chancellor's clumsy bidding for the applause of the bawlers, do not threaten the security of the State; let the detection and punishment of them be left to the authorities and let severity be reserved for real criminals. The evils of a centralising bureaucracy are only to be healed by a national organisation of provincial institutions, not by wearisome and expensive changes in administrative machinery and personnel.

Moreover, if the institution of Estates is to be made effective the care of it must be committed to faithful hands, familiar with the spirit of it and handling it with love, lest what has been carefully weighed and wisely determined should be carried out with ill-will or unskilfulness or both, and make shipwreck on this rock.

To the question of the Constitution of General Estates which has been imposed on me I will devote my undivided attention, but I consider the Provincial Estates as a prelude to the difficult task of summoning General Estates; through them we shall not only ascertain what spirit they breathe, but gather much experience which we may use in organising the Imperial Estates. Add

that their wholesome influence on universal legislation and frugal judicious finance will be proved, as in Bavaria, even though much that is defective and clumsy shows itself in Estates and Governments, and the wounds of twenty years of war cannot be healed in a few years of peace.

To a friend he sums up the contents of his pamphlet as follows:

It was against a single Chamber, against the abolition of the rights of the Noble Corporations, against the exclusion of the Church, and it contains an enumeration of the branches of administration to be committed to the Estates, it insisted on the right of sanction and ratification in provincial affairs; that is, it attacked the most substantial parts of the new plan.

It was despatched November 11th, 1822. About this time Stein meditated a visit to Berlin, and it is even stated that he had received some sort of invitation, apparently from the King. On the other hand, his old friend Vincke dissuaded him from going, thought that such a step would attract attention at Verona, and that disagreeable results would follow if Hardenberg and Wittgenstein should find him at Berlin on their return. The Crown Prince, he reported, would be glad to see him, but had not received instructions positively to invite him. But he still entertains the idea, when at the end of November news arrived that Hardenberg had died at Genoa on his return from the Congress in the 73rd year of his age.

We have traced the gradual estrangement of Stein from his old colleague and chief until it has become positive aversion. The last three years had gone far towards identifying Hardenberg with the party of Wittgenstein, and the scandals of his private

life had grown unpardonable with his old age and decay. All these considerations, however, hardly prepare us for the outbreak with which Stein hails the news.

Meanwhile (he writes) intelligence comes from Frankfurt that the Chancellor has had a stroke at Genoa and is dead; *if only he is really and downright dead and for the last time, then in the first place I congratulate the Prussian Monarchy on this happy event,* and next I hope the King will commit the chief branches of administration to the Crown Prince, and that he will form an effective Ministry so as to have instruments to undertake a thorough revolution of the existing system, and to introduce parsimony, thoroughness and order again into all departments, for instead of them we now have insubordination, superficiality, waste and empty ostentation.

We can, perhaps, trace in these words a thought which occurred at this moment to all minds, the thought that now, as in 1807, Hardenberg's succession must fall to Stein. On December 7th he writes that he 'has postponed his journey to Berlin, in order to avoid the appearance of intrigue and of personal views, which at the moment, in consequence of the death of the Chancellor, would be attributed to him.' When Voss also died shortly afterwards the general expectation became still stronger. But the King took Count Lottum instead, and what seemed likely to be the beginning of a new career for Stein proved the definitive close of his career. Stein and Hardenberg, in fact, pass off the political stage together.

In the autobiography there occurs, under the year 1810, a sketch of Hardenberg's character, which has the more interest when we observe that it was written immediately after his death. For it

was at this moment, at the beginning of 1823, that Stein, at the request of the Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria, wrote his autobiography. The passage runs as follows:

H. v. Hardenberg had the good humour and friendliness of sanguine sensual temperaments, a ready apprehension, activity, an agreeable exterior. But his character wanted not only a moral and religious basis but also greatness, intensive force and firmness, his understanding wanted depth, his acquirements solidity, hence his weakness, his intoxication in prosperity, his maudlin softness in adversity, his superficiality which, guided by his sensuality, pride, and falseness, caused so much mischief. He kept all good people at a distance, and surrounded himself solely with mediocre and often with bad people, who abused him and often treated him with indecency; his favourite recreation was indecent conversation; intercourse with worthless women, ill-becoming his grey hairs, his pride and dignity, lowered him still more; he undermined the old Prussian spirit of parsimony and obedience, and when he died he left the finances in disorder, and public affairs in the hands of a multitude of ill-chosen officials. He was not one who aimed at what is great and good for its own sake, but only as a means to personal fame, and for that reason he could not conceive it nor attain to it, and departed unhonoured and unregretted.

By this word 'departed,' quite out of place under date 1810, Stein betrays the strong and fresh impression under which the passage was written. It is a somewhat melancholy passage when we consider how much the critic and the criticised had endured and done together in 1806 and 1807, and how inseparably their names are associated in Prussian history. Possibly when historical investigation overtakes the last years of Hardenberg's life, which it has not yet done, it may be shown to be in some respects unjust. Still it was not an opinion which had been formed hastily, nor was it written down

lightly, and it was an opinion which many of the most intelligent contemporaries would have subscribed when Stein wrote it.

But it must be confessed that Prussian politicians in general pass harsh judgments on each other. Almost as much injustice as in England is caused by party-government seems to have arisen in old Prussia from the secresy of government, the noisome atmosphere of calumny that hangs about an absolute Court, the mutual rivalry of provinces, and the dogmatism that is a characteristic of the bureaucratic spirit.

At this point I feel that my task is substantially done. An age of Prussian and even of German history ends when Stein and Hardenberg leave the scene, and it is this age which it has been my task to describe. What are its characteristics? How does it compare with the other ages of Prussia?

Stein and Hardenberg agreed in being adventurous reformers, and if the most sweeping changes happened to be Stein's, Hardenberg is most open to the charge of rashness; nor did Hardenberg, though he consented to give his name at last to a policy of reaction, ever cease to be a reformer at heart. The whole period then from the moment when in April, 1807, Hardenberg formed the Immediate Commission till his death, the whole Stein-Hardenberg period, is one of reform. It is also throughout a period of dictatorial government, with the exception of the unfortunate interregnum between Stein and Hardenberg which filled 1809 and part of 1810. In this second characteristic it is

unique among the periods of Prussian history. The times of the Great Elector, of Frederick William I. and of Frederick the Great had been times of strenuous reform, but the Sovereign himself had been the reformer; here the reformer is a dictator nominated by the Sovereign and trusted by him.

These dictators take the place of the old Hohenzollerns, as in domestic government and legislation, so too in national defence, except that they are not actually soldiers. The period resembles at once that of Frederick William I. and that of Frederick the Great; it is at once a time of internal reconstruction and a second Seven Years War. The danger and distress are even greater than in Frederick's War, but the dictators are there to maintain the King's courage, to protect him from fatal advisers, to keep the country respectable in the eyes of foreign Powers. And just as Frederick William I.'s reforms were all made with a view to future national defence, so in this period reform and defence are closely connected, and at the end of it reform gradually ceases because defence is no longer required.

Such is the age considered purely from the Prussian point of view. But it is similar when regarded from the point of view of Germany to this extent, that here too, though faintly and fitfully, the people are led rather than followed by their Governments. Many German Governments were indeed traitorous, but so far as Germany was faithful to herself her patriotism is appealed to and evoked by her Governments. We have seen this to have been the case during Count Stadion's regime in Austria;

even Metternich, half-hearted as he was in the War of Liberation, did at last, and without popular compulsion, join the national side. But it is principally Stein himself who forces the German Governments to take this course. It is he who, helped by the Emperor Alexander, for a moment revives a central German administration, for a moment overrules petty discords, and calls out authoritatively a German force against Napoleon, at the same time that the other dictator, Hardenberg, is calling out the whole strength of Prussia.

But by this course the dictators create a new spirit both in the Prussian and the German people. They bring to an end the reign of passive Philistinism, they awaken Germany to political consciousness. Their system, though it keeps the initiative entirely in the hand of Government, nevertheless imperatively requires free-will and character on the part of the people. The War of Liberation superficially may look like the Seven Years War, but between the armies of Frederick and those of Blücher there is as great a difference as between the Persian and Greek armies at Marathon. The former consist of slaves governed by the lash, the latter of citizens inspired by Arndt and Körner. But they are citizens in whom public feelings are still new and fresh, their consciousness is infantine, sensitive, inexperienced. Hence when they return victorious from the battle-field they require very considerate treatment. Their rulers are still legally despotic, nor are they at first at all inclined to rebel against this despotism. On the contrary, in such states as Prussia the people are more passionately loyal than

they had ever been before. Nevertheless they can no longer be governed in the old way; they have acquired on the battle-field new moral rights, rights which narrow-minded officials or princes spoiled by absolute power will never understand. Ordinary officials and princes now imagine that all difficulties are removed, and that a time of repose is before them, just when the task of government has become more delicate and critical than ever. A public opinion has come into existence to which Government cannot but be responsible in a way that Frederick the Great or his father had never felt themselves responsible. And yet Government is still Government, still accustomed to take the lead in everything, and especially in reforms. The two dictators were still alive, the one old and declining, the other elderly but full of vigour. There was more need than ever of their energy, their judgment, and their reputation. Unfortunately they could not agree, and the one who nominally held the reins was the older, the less serious, and the less magnanimous of the two.

Hence a transition took place which brought to an end the Stein-Hardenberg age. 'The precise change that happened lay in this, that Government ceased to lead public opinion, and began to quarrel with it. It was not merely that Government took a different view from the public, but that it seemed to have a different interest. It began to be spoken of as tyrannical, to be regarded as a hindrance rather than a help, an evil rather than a good. The unfortunate perversion which Prussia had hitherto escaped now penetrated there too.

A period began of chronic agitation on the part of the people, while Government assumed the rôle of one who obstinately withholds something until it is extorted by clamour, or of a fortress suffering siege and compelled to yield one rampart after another. What happened now in Prussia had taken place still earlier in Germany, where the commencement made by Stein had led to nothing in consequence of the insuperable difficulty found in organising the Federation. This transition in Germany was roughly contemporaneous with a similar change all over the Continent. Alexander at this time ceases to be Liberal, and each Sovereign begins to recognize that his state contains a latent revolution. The doctrine of Conservatism grows up, having its head-quarters in Austria, Metternich for its leader in politics, and Gentz for its leader in literature; it is therefore naturally at this time that the party-names of Liberal and Conservative come into use, and they pass into England by being applied to the two sides of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet.

CHAPTER III.

LAST YEARS.

It only remains to satisfy the personal interest which Stein may be supposed to have excited in the reader who has traced his political career to its end, by describing the quiet course of the nine years that remained to him.

The old age of one who has taken part in great events cannot but be much occupied with contemporary history and biography. He watches the events of his life-time assuming the shape which they are ultimately to take in the history of the world; he sees representations of them published, which he knows himself able to correct; he broods over the question whether he himself might prudently, as he knows himself able to do, appear as a historian. It was so with Stein in his old age.

First, as we have seen, he gratified the curiosity of the Crown Prince of Bavaria by writing in his own curt style his autobiography. All the more important statements which it contains will be found not merely repeated but actually quoted in this

book. When read continuously it suggests the following reflexions.

First, the style of it is precisely like that of the numerous memoirs from his hand which we have had to quote, good, clear and strong, but official. It is not intended for the public, but—so far as it contemplates other readers than the Crown Prince—for historians. Anecdotes, descriptions, general reflexions, are absolutely excluded from it; the only passages in which any literary effect seems to be aimed at are the sketches of Hardenberg and Wittgenstein. Considered as a 'Memoire pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps,' it is less valuable than it might have been, because it betrays that Stein had not looked forward at the time when he was in the midst of great affairs to writing a record of them.

The autobiography of Hardenberg, which has recently appeared, was brooded over by its author for years; as early as 1813 he was in the habit, as we learn from Jackson, of talking of it at his own table. That of Stein may have been written in a week, and the intention of writing it may have been formed a week before. Written in this way autobiography cannot be minutely accurate. Goethe avowed that his autobiography was half poetry, but Goethe had the advantage that he was an object of great interest and of perpetual study to himself. This was not the case with Stein; we have called him proud, but he was proud of his family and of his knighthood, not of himself. There has seldom lived a man who troubled himself less about his own merits, or claims, or reputation. When compliments are paid to him he neither accepts nor affects to

decline them, but passes them by without any notice. His letters contain absolutely no complaints of being ill-used, or not fully appreciated. The veiled forms of egoism, vindication, confession, penitence, are just as foreign to him as self-praise. Hence, though his fame has not escaped jealous depreciation, his assailants have never been able to show that he himself laid claim to the merits which they deny him; they may accuse his admirers of claiming too much, but they can bring no such accusation against himself.

Such careless freedom in a powerful nature conquers the hearts of friends and dependents, but it is not one of the qualifications of an autobiographer. The man who is not disposed to think his doings particularly important will not be likely to remember them accurately; the man who has never troubled himself to inquire what are his claims to praise or fame will not state those claims effectively. When we consider it, the praise of an autobiographer is to reveal what it is the virtue of a man to keep secret. We are disappointed in Stein's autobiography because it does not tell us of the faults of his friends, or the foibles of Frederick William his king, or the Czar his patron; because it leaves undecided all the questions which it might have settled, but which Stein did not care to settle, the questions how much was due to him and how much to others, how far he was right and how far he thought himself wrong. It contains indeed attacks upon certain persons, but these were his avowed opponents; what is the use of an autobiography if it does not attack friends?

But it is also somewhat vague and careless in details. To narrate quite accurately is perhaps not possible for any man who tries to record a complicated occurrence of his own life which he had no intention of recording, and therefore kept no note of, at the time it happened. Stein's account of what he did at Königsberg in January, 1813, is scarcely more satisfactory than Schön's account of it, though the inaccuracy has no sinister object; you see that he has half forgotten what happened.

It is also to be borne in mind, as Pertz remarks, that in writing to the Crown Prince of Bavaria he was obliged to be very reticent in his account of the War of Liberation, in which Bavaria played such an ignominious part.

But as a specimen of Stein's character the autobiography is all the more interesting for some of these defects. In its original shape it ended at the first Peace of Paris, a short paragraph being added in memory of Stein's wife; but a year later, on March 14th, 1824, he added some paragraphs explaining his retirement from public life and how he tried to solve the double problem which he found presented to him, that of reconciling himself to want of occupation and to old age. After mentioning his historical scheme, his settlement at Cappenberg and the share he took thenceforth in Westphalian politics, he adds by way of conclusion:

As to the solution of the other problem presented to me, how to assume the right position in old age, it was lightened to me by the disappointment of my hopes of the approach of a better future for Germany and by many inconveniences in the interior of my own family; these, which in particular cases affected me very

deeply and painfully, and often incommoded me in daily life, weaned my mind from earthly things; I expect nothing further from this life but a continuous discipline in resignation, humility, hope, and faith.

I am rather surprised at this sentence, which points at more serious domestic troubles than I can find any trace of in his correspondence. But that he had one annoyance appears from a letter to his sister Marianne dated Nov. 18th, 1822.

I thank you, dear Marianne, for the assistance you have given to Louise; you will see from the enclosed the difficulties in which she lives. It is not very uncommon for a great property to be swallowed up in play, feminine caprice, and hazardous undertakings; but it is to me inexplicable how it can have been wasted in vanity in so short a time! It will be a better arrangement to bequeath an annuity to Louise, I mean the daughter, than a sum to the parents which will only fall into the gulf of the old debts.

These parents of course are the Senfts. They cross the scene again, paying a visit to Nassau; when we find that they have been received into the Catholic Church. Stein seems to forget his old animosity to the husband, of which Senfft complains in his memoirs, in consideration of his reduced plight. He may have felt much for the misfortune and misconduct of the daughter of that dearly-loved sister whom we saw vanquishing the heart of the youthful Hardenberg just fifty years ago at Nassau.

So much for Stein's own contribution to the history of his time, which was slighter than might have been expected from one who, besides exceptional information, had so decided a turn for history. But he marked with attention all that appeared from other pens. His last years were indeed a critical

period in historical literature. Actions and events on a greater scale than had been known before, lay waiting to be chronicled. The French Revolution and Napoleon were knocking at the door of history, and it was soon to be decided what place would be assigned them. In a letter to Arndt (1827) he writes, 'Do you know Botta, Histoire de l'Italie depuis 1789? Who is the author? I fancy a Piedmontese officer. He is a good intelligent man, not a tiresome twaddler like W. Scott, who conceives the facts wrongly and feebly, and narrates them diffusely!' We must make allowance for the irritation of a statesman, when he sees the greatest events and those which concern himself most closely appropriated with so little ceremony by the purveyors of light reading for the public. Who knows but he had a glimpse of that *interesting* school of historians which was later to cause so much mischief by theatrical misrepresentations of the French Revolution and of the career of Napoleon? I must pause a moment on one book, the first appearance of which he notes in a letter to Gagern. He writes (March 19th, 1829), 'The Mémoires d'un homme d'état '92—'15, are interesting, because they put together the occurrences of those years—they were the result of the way of thinking of the time, the selfishness of the Cabinets, the narrowness of the Generals; there was not a single great ruling idea, not a single heroic figure.' (The reader should note that only the first two volumes of the book had appeared at this time, and that this remark of Stein's is evidently intended to apply only to the War of the First Coalition.) He adds that the successes of 1812—1815 were the re-

sult of the opposite qualities, enthusiasm in the Czar (whom, as always, he places first), heroism in Blücher and his army, enthusiasm in the German people, fortitude in the English Cabinet. It is curious that he does not raise the question of the authorship of the book or speculate as to who the statesman may have been from whose papers it was drawn. Gagern in his answer does not fail to do so. He writes, 'I found your opinion on the Mémoires, &c., exceedingly interesting, pregnantly expressed, instructive. Are we to suppose that Hardenberg left them so *in scriptis;* or are they notes by Koreff, or perhaps the Chancellor's last wife, like those we have on Napoleon from Las Casas and the English physician?'

Had Stein lived longer these questions would certainly have occupied him much. In the year of his death, 1831, these volumes were republished, with corrections, and eleven other volumes were afterwards added to them. They have been commonly spoken of since as the Memoirs of Hardenberg. The principal reason I have for mentioning them here is that they contain, in the 9th volume, an account of Stein and his Ministry, and that it is this account and no other which has since been current in England and France. The ordinary English reader has scarcely the means of informing himself about Stein except from Alison's History of Europe, and Alison does nothing but reproduce the statements of the anonymous *homme d'état.*

There have been many successful literary forgeries, but it has seldom happened that a book well known to be a forgery has been so freely used by historians as this. There is scarcely an English or

French writer on the revolutionary period who has not drawn his information about German affairs mainly from it. And yet it has been long known to be the work of several compilers, Alphonse de Beauchamp, Alexander Schubert, and Count d'Allonville, and that their sources were principally the gossip current among the French *emigrés*. Pertz, who saw something of Schubert at Paris in 1827, and who read some of the proofs of the book, thinks that Schubert had bought some of Hardenberg's papers, and there seems to have been an impression among historians—an impression, however, which was never justifiable—that the substance of the book was really Hardenberg's. There is no longer even an excuse for this opinion, since Hardenberg's genuine Memoirs have been given to the world, and we may see now upon what an unsound foundation the history of that time, as it is current among us, rests.

Stein in this book is born in 1756, and becomes Controller of Excise and Customs in 1784! In his absence at Nassau in 1807 he meditates so profoundly on the causes of the ruin of Prussia, that he is able not only to pass a fundamental law four days after becoming Minister, but also to reform the Municipalities in less than six weeks afterwards, so that in 58 days the whole State is transformed! This latter statement is arrived at by overlooking that the Municipal Reform belongs to November, 1808, and not to November, 1807! After provoking the displeasure of Napoleon, he is forced to flee to *Russia*, but from his seclusion he succeeds in founding the Tugendbund! All this Alison repeats faithfully,

and once or twice he flatters himself that he can add a little detail. So for instance he tells us that Stein directed the agitation in Germany from his retreat in Courland! Can this be some confused reminiscence of Hardenberg's retirement to Riga in 1807?

But this legendary account of Stein, which he never lived to read, was entirely honourable to him. It was otherwise with some allusions occurring in the Memoirs of Bourrienne which appeared in 1829. This work of Napoleon's secretary provoked indeed protests from many of the personages mentioned in it; and the criticisms upon it which appeared were afterwards collected into two volumes entitled, 'Bourrienne et ses erreurs volontaires et involontaires.' He has two passages which concern Stein. In the first, which gives an account of the arrest of Prince Wittgenstein in 1808, in consequence of the suspicions arising out of the intercepted letter, Bourrienne takes occasion to devote a page or two to Stein's character. This passage is full of eulogy, though Bourrienne avows that his knowledge of Stein is very slight. But the other passage is very different. In Vol. VIII. p. 348 commences a chapter which is entirely devoted to the story of a certain Sahla with whom Bourrienne had had some intercourse. Bourrienne had once been a student at Leipzig, and Sahla had come from Leipzig University in the year 1811 to Paris, and had there been arrested on suspicion of meditating the assassination of Napoleon. On his arrest he had desired to see Bourrienne, of whom he had heard speak at Leipzig; Bourrienne conversed with

him, was interested, and succeeded, according to his own account, in persuading Savary that it would be unwise to proceed to extremities with the young fanatic. Sahla was shut up in Vincennes, where he remained until the fall of Napoleon led to his release. He then returned to Saxony, but during the Hundred Days Bourrienne, then at Hamburg, heard of him again. It appeared that on June 5th, at the Chamber of Representatives at Paris, a violent explosion had been suddenly heard, which had been at first taken for thunder, but it was discovered that a young Saxon had fallen down upon a packet of fulminating silver which he carried in his pocket and had suffered terrible mutilation. This was Sahla, and Bourrienne avows that his first impression had been that he had failed in another attempt to destroy Napoleon, and perhaps the Chambre Législative along with him. But he adds, 'I have since learned that I was mistaken about Sahla's intentions.' He then gives an account of Sahla's declaration to the police, affirming that he trusts in Sahla's veracity, and that if the declaration contains any inaccuracies he would unhesitatingly impute them rather to the police, of which Fouché had again at that time become Prefect. The prisoner's story then, as published by the police, was as follows:

He does not deny that he formerly had the intention of destroying the Emperor, whom he regarded as the oppressor of Germany; but that oppression having ceased his motive for hating the author of it has disappeared also. The rapacious conduct of the Congress and particularly of the Prussians against Saxony has since exasperated him greatly against the latter, and when he heard of the Emperor's landing and of the good success of his enterprise, he began to see in him the liberator of his unfortunate

country, and resolved to render him all the services in his power. For this purpose he must come to France. He sought an audience of M. de Hardenberg, and having obtained it feigned in his presence to be more bent than ever upon carrying out his former design. M. de Hardenberg after loading him with praise and encouragement sent him to Marshal Blücher whom he requested to facilitate his entry into France. The chief of Blücher's staff advised him to take with him the fulminating silver, and even recommended a shop at Namur where he could get it. Not to excite suspicion Sahla went to this shop and bought only four ounces of it. He then entered France, and on his arrival in Paris immediately communicated to the Government, particularly the War Department, all the information he had collected about the force of the Allies, their plans and resources. He considered that by doing a service to France he was serving his own country.

The Report then continued:

It is added that he also asserts himself to have disclosed with proofs to M. de Metternich, in a visit which he paid to Vienna, that M. de Stein, the Prussian Minister, had employed him to poison M. de Montgelas, the Bavarian Minister, and that M. de Metternich had appeared indignant and shocked at such conduct on the part of M. de Stein. If these assertions are true it must be confessed that some members of the Prussian cabinet employed at that time very unusual methods of diplomacy.

Bourrienne comments on this story—after again protesting that if there is any mistake he is sure it has been made rather by the police than by Sahla—as follows:

It is very difficult to admit without proof such enormous statements as that M. de Hardenberg encouraged Sahla to assassinate Napoleon, and M. de Stein to assassinate the Bavarian Minister Montgelas. I pronounce no opinion (Je ne décide rien), but I regard it as a duty to express doubts on accusations of this kind brought against two Prussian Ministers, of whom Prince Wittgenstein, the soul of honour (homme d'honneur par excellence), had always spoken in respectful terms during my residence at Ham-

burg. And indeed is it not at least equally probable that the crafty police of the Hundred Days had recourse to one of its familiar methods to throw contempt and excite indignation against its enemies? These, I repeat, are the questions I suggest without venturing to resolve any of them.

This is a very pretty piece of calumny! How could Bourrienne behave more handsomely to Stein than to declare him an honourable man on the testimony of Prince Wittgenstein? And can anything be more *fair* than to admit that the story may just as well be an invention of Fouché's agents as be true?

But perhaps it might have been fair to go a step further and pronounce the story to be *evidently* an invention of Fouché's agents. Napoleon's power depended so mainly upon the character he kept up before the world of an emancipator, a reformer, a popular hero, that nothing could be more embarrassing to him than to be proclaimed a tyrant in the most impressive way possible by becoming the object of desperate and fanatical attempts at tyrannicide. These attempts were still more embarrassing when they came from the peaceful German race. The act of Staps in 1809 had impressed him deeply, and he had taken much pains to hush it up. Now Sahla was another Staps, and in the Hundred Days Napoleon had a reputation to regain, and appeared before the world as in some degree a penitent. It was therefore all-important to conceal the fact that after suffering three years' imprisonment for his former attempt, Sahla had no sooner heard of Napoleon's restoration than he set off for Paris with a packet of fulminating silver in his

pocket. The impudent ingenuity with which Fouché gives the story such a turn as to make its edge fall upon Prussia is worthy of the conventional detected rogue of comedy. Sahla was a Saxon, and all his rage, it appears, was turned against the Government which had mutilated his fatherland! To be sure the fulminating silver would not hurt Prussia at Paris, but this was merely a blind, the object of which had been to induce the Prussians to allow him an entrance into France. One might remark that it was highly imprudent of him to carry such a packet habitually about him after this object was attained; but a lie of Fouché's is not intended any more than a landscape of Turner's to be brought near to the eye.

However, Bourrienne most handsomely admits that probably Fouché invented the story. That only proves that there is a blacker lie even than the lie which is half a truth, viz. the lie which is *all* true. For how could such a story be answered except by saying what Bourrienne had said already, viz. that it was probably an invention of Fouché's? But yet innocent people who cannot imagine that anything which appears in print can be untrue, and indolent people who find scandal against famous men the cheapest seasoning for conversation, would snatch at the story as eagerly as if it were well-attested, and think it all the more authentic for the air of candour with which it was told. At any rate, if it were allowed to pass uncontradicted it would soon be widely believed. Stein roused himself, and wrote in French a refutation of the calumny, to be inserted in the French papers. A translation of the refuta-

tion was sent to the Allgemeine Zeitung, and was inserted there on December 7th, 1829, while the original owing to various circumstances did not appear in Paris. In February, 1830, he printed a pamphlet containing the original passage from Bourrienne; his own letter of refutation; a letter from Prince Metternich denying altogether the story of Sahla; a rejoinder to a reply since made by Bourrienne in a letter to Gagern; and some further remarks on a sentence from Bourrienne's 10th volume, which runs as follows: 'Had the King of Prussia been without legitimate grounds of enmity against Napoleon it would have been prudent in him at that time to appear as his enemy, for it was a great means of acquiring popularity among his subjects, who were almost all imbued with the principles of liberty, and indeed with some ideas of carbonarism, spread and propagated by M. de Stein and his adepts.' It is of course easy for Stein to show the absurdity of this by relating with how much distinction and confidence the Sovereigns had treated him, and by signing himself Knight of the Black Eagle, and of the Orders of St Andrew and St Stephen of Hungary. He closes the pamphlet with the words: 'I have one request to make of M. de Bourrienne. I fear his conscience may lead him to correct the passages in question. I beg him as a favour to do nothing of the kind—his corrections would bear the mark of his style, the style of an artist who has not been trained in a good school.'

The affair brought Stein into some correspondence with the great publisher Cotta, in the course

of which Cotta expressed the hope of having the honour of publishing Memoirs from the hand of Stein himself. This hint drew from Stein a characteristic utterance on the subject of autobiography in general.

> It is true that I possess many *memoranda* and materials for the history of the years 1806—1815, but I have never collected or arranged them, and have not even resolved to do so—it is in general disagreeable to me to speak of my own doings, for it is difficult as a rule to define the share one has had in an occurrence. One may attach oneself to definite principles and may have remained faithful to these, but the accomplishing of any work, &c. —that depends on so many external and incalculable circumstances —one must be a Frenchman to say with complacency, this I did or furthered or caused to be done, &c.

We see here the explanation of that want of precise assertion which we have so often had to deplore in the autobiography.

Meanwhile his taste for history was indulged with less restraint in the study of the German Middle Ages. He laboured perseveringly to procure help and sympathy for the Society he had founded. The task was more difficult than we might suppose if we considered only the natural taste of the Germans for fundamental research, and the great position of Stein in Germany. There were other difficulties besides that 'obstinate isolation' of German authorship which Dahlmann had spoken of. One of these Dahlmann himself illustrated. Just after the Carlsbad Resolutions Dahlmann wrote to Büchler (Nov. 6th, 1819) that he had thought it a matter of course after those Resolutions that the Society would be dissolved,

since the university-teachers who formed a great proportion of the editors whom the Society was to employ, would not be eager to place themselves under the direction of men with whose concurrence or sufferance they, and the institutions under their care, had been insulted and degraded in a manner never to be forgotten. He went on to say:

I have lost the hope that under such guidance and protection after such occurrences any benefit for science can accrue even from the most commendable enterprises. The best success can produce nothing calculated to elevate intelligence or feeling which would not be essentially irreconcilable with the spirit of those Protocols....And so I bid farewell to this undertaking till I know that those of the Federal Diet who stand at the head of it have declared that they will have no share in the mischief which those decrees will infallibly inflict on Germany. While I write this I have before me the image of the exalted founder and first president of the Society, the Baron vom Stein, in my eyes the greatest statesman, in that he puts his diplomacy under the responsibility of his fearless sense of right and of public opinion.

This compliment suggested to Stein that he might fairly hint to Dahlmann, If *I* do not think myself bound to retire from the Society, surely you need not. He wrote as follows:

I do not discuss here the Resolutions of the Diet or of the Carlsbad Conference; let them be as pernicious as you please, our literary undertaking may go on without being disturbed or hindered by them, since it has no immediate connexion with the present, the participation of some Members of the Diet in the direction being partly accidental, partly useful, and their good disposition much to be valued; otherwise I myself from the outset just as much as you now should have felt a scruple against entering into association with them, or remaining in it.

But take the worst and darkest view; are we therefore to despair and take our hands from the plough or abandon ourselves

to ill-humour and the indulgence of an unmanly dejection, and lose trust in Providence? Such conduct does not beseem a strong, sound, pious man. Retract a decision which has arisen from dissatisfaction at an occurrence which does not in any way concern our undertaking, and abide by the good and worthy purpose of joining and helping in the good work of diffusing the historical memorials of our country.

It was of no use; Dahlmann would not retract his decision, and Stein wrote to Gagern, 'Scholars are an irritable irrational set of people.'

But the greatest obstacle was in that general indifference to what concerned Germany as a whole, which we have described. It was a point of honour with Stein not to receive help from abroad. When he heard from St Petersburg of the possibility that his old enemy, the Chancellor Romanzoff, might be expected to give help, he said: 'It would be humiliating that we should need the help of a Russian for our edition of the sources of German history; I solemnly protest against it.' And it appears that later the Czar Alexander actually offered to pay the expenses of the undertaking, and that Stein declined to accept the offer. But for a long time subscriptions, whether from private persons or from German Governments, came in very slowly. The Prince Bishops of Corvey and Hildesheim refused to give. The Austrian Government saw something revolutionary in the scheme, and Gentz declared that the Emperor could not possibly regard such a society with satisfaction. But it was a greater disappointment that the Prussian Government was languid in giving help. Altenstein, who was now at the head of the Culture Department, was more enthusiastic in promoting

Natural than Human History. 'It seems to me,' writes Stein, 'that our nation has a greater and more general interest in its history than in the knowledge of any *erica* from the Cape, or some new species of Brazilian ape.' And again, 'No subscription yet from Altenstein. Meanwhile he has sent out twelve scientific travellers, and we may expect to see a musical score of the song of the howling apes of South America as the result of the learned labours of one of these gentlemen.' These Brazilian apes caught his indignant fancy, and often reappear in his correspondence on this subject.

On Goethe's seventieth birthday the Direction assembled at Frankfurt named him an honorary member of the Society, and received from him a letter of thanks in his most courteous style. He mentioned his visit to Stein in 1815 when he first heard of the plan, and remarks that, 'although his own labours, whether in poetry or in other departments, had always been directed towards what is nearest and most present in life, yet they could never have been successful without serious attention to past times.'

This is not the only occasion on which Goethe's name appears in the early history of the Monumenta. It appears that he offered to undertake translations of some of the documents, with that curious readiness to stoop to tasks much below his powers which we see in his translation of Benvenuto Cellini. Stein's answer is that it was never the intention of the Society to furnish German translations of the Documents, but that perhaps H. v. Goethe will undertake this on his own account—in

hexameters if he likes! It is curious to find him at another time making the very same suggestion, translations of the principal works for the use of the ordinary reading public (July 23, 1827).

Stein lived to see the publication of two volumes of the Monumenta, the first of which appeared in 1826 and the second in 1829. The first consisted principally of the Annales of the Carolingian period.

In order (says Wattenbach) to avail ourselves safely of these Annales so as to get from them really a safe foundation for chronology, everything depends on an investigation of their origin and descent, on distinguishing later additions, and coming as near as possible to the original, if we cannot now actually find the original itself. This is what Pertz did for the first time for the whole mass of the Carolingian Annales in the first volume of the Monumenta; he did it so admirably, and availed himself so comprehensively of the materials, both printed and in MS., which had been made known at that time, that here the surest foundation for all further investigation was given.

The second volume contains the Chronicles and Biographies of the Carolingian Period.

Though Pertz is the hero of the Monumenta yet the history of them ought not to be written, however slightly, without naming also J. F. Böhmer, a man who 'alone accomplished more than many societies' (Wattenbach). He had originally been Librarian at Frankfurt, and, as we have seen, was joined with Pertz in the direction of the Society. He had originally intended to reserve to himself the department of the Imperial Charters, but afterwards gave this up and devoted himself to the Regesta. Later he produced an independent collection of Sources under the title of Fontes Rerum Ger-

manicarum. He has recorded some of his impressions of Stein. Thus in 1824 he writes:

Stein is nearly seventy years old, but full of fire and force like a youth; a genuine German nobleman, the last of his ancient race. No storm either in the physical or moral world can shake him. In his mansion at Nassau he has built a lofty old-German tower, with the inscription, Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott. He is the founder of the Society for older German history, and he knows history himself as few Professors do. But what strikes me most in him is his reliance on Providence, although there are perhaps few men of his powers whose plans and hopes have been so much frustrated.

Again:

I am often allowed to be with him for hours together, and cannot at all express how I feel myself elevated by him, but at the same time taught humility and reliance on God in earnest industry. I am touched by his kindness and his readiness to sacrifice time to me.

And after Stein's death:

It is the heaviest loss I have had since Nov. 27, 1817, when my father died. It is as if a star had gone out in heaven. It gave me such pleasure to work under his eye! No approbation can be to me such a reward as I found when he was satisfied with my labours on the history of our country.

In 1827 the Berlin Academy named Stein one of its honorary members in acknowledgment of his merits as founder of the Society. Their resolution was communicated to him by Schleiermacher as secretary to the historical and philosophical section. Stein acknowledged the compliment with the words: 'I feel the more deeply the honour of being named an honorary member of so famous a scientific society, as I can boast of no achievement in science, but only of an indirect influence towards the promo-

tion of it, for which I am rewarded by the solace it affords my old age.'

Stein was allowed in these years to take his share in Local, though not in Imperial, Government. Vincke, as Superior President of Westphalia, named him to the Government as by far the fittest person to preside as Marshal at the meeting of the Provincial Estates of the Province when they were first assembled in 1826. Accordingly he was appointed by an order of Cabinet dated May 17th of that year, and accepted the appointment rather with resignation than pleasure. 'At my age,' he writes, 'the long sittings, and the attention which the proceedings will require, will be very tiresome, exhausting and exciting; however, do your duty and let come what will!' And here in a sentence quoted already the old man calls to mind the example of his mother and of his early patron Heinitz, of whom he says, 'that their life was a succession of efforts and sacrifices, and that they never took a thought of their own convenience.'

The Assembly met at Münster on October 29th, 1826. Vincke in his opening speech took occasion to speak of the venerable man who was not a native of this province, but, what was still better, had come to belong to it of free choice through a genuine attachment, respect and love for its inhabitants,' and whose presidency in the Assembly was the best security for the decorum and wisdom of its deliberations. The words were certainly no empty compliment. The link that connected Stein with this province was of no common kind. He had been regarded with enthusiasm here long before the world

at large had heard of him, and he had chosen it, after great achievements memorable in Prussian, German, and European history, as the home of his old age, '*modus lasso maris et viarum militiaeque.*' It must have been interesting to see him standing in the assembly like old Attinghausen among the Swiss peasantry. He answered Vincke with a speech in which he praised local parliaments in the language familiar to him. 'This constitution will unite us, train us, elevate us. It will unite our hearts by making us all strive after one goal, the glory of our country; it will ripen the mind to serious and ennobling activity, and prevent it from dissolving in indolence, sensual enjoyment, or childish vanity, or selfish industry; it will give self-respect to the individual, by bringing his nobler and better energies into play.'

We can easily believe that he made an efficient president. Perhaps the danger would be of his authority being felt too oppressively, when we consider not merely his fame but his natural turn for despotism. One of the representatives, keeper of a hotel which Stein had used, came to him at the opening of the Assembly and asked for advice as to the line of conduct he was to pursue. 'You are to sit still,' said Stein, 'and listen to what wiser people have to say.'

The session lasted this year till November 29th, and was closed by Stein with another speech, in which he recommended more unity among classes. Questions had been raised which interested Stein so much that in the next March (1827) he paid a visit to Berlin in order to discuss them with the Ministers

and if possible with the King. He had not seen Berlin since eighteen years before he had left it in the night to take refuge in Bohemia. He afterwards wrote to Archbishop Spiegel his impression of the change which the interval had made in the metropolis.

I was pleased with my visit. I found after eighteen years' absence an advance in serious and thorough culture, partly caused by the presence of sound academical teachers who had replaced such shallow talkers as Nicolai, Ramler, Zölner, &c.; I found manners purer and more religious, nothing more of the frivolous, loose habits of the officers of gensd'arme, and art and taste for art heightened and diffused, in short, general progress both intellectual and moral.

During this visit the King named him a member of the Council of State by an Order of Cabinet dated April 30th.

The Westphalian Assembly met for the second time in 1828, and sat from November 3rd till December 21st. Its third session, the last at which Stein presided, fell at the end of 1830, commencing on December 11th of that year and ending on January 17th, 1831. He did not grow less despotic with practice, and the following description is from an eye-witness of his bearing in the session of 1830.

When the old man came with his staff into the hall crowded with members standing in motley groups, every one hurried silently to his place, and absolute silence began to reign. No president's bell was needed to announce the commencement of the sitting; his mere appearance was a living sign. Prolixity he held in mortal horror, and often interrupted the talkers very roughly; just as little could he endure an adherence to minute formalities....Once a Deputy came to the Marshal and applied for permission, which was required by rule, to read a written

address on some question. STEIN. I have no objection, but pray be short. DEPUTY. I will try to be as short as I can. STEIN. And do say something clever! till now I have heard nothing from you but nonsense. DEPUTY. I am very sorry not to be always able to take the same view as your Excellency. STEIN. No, no! we have nothing in common but eating and drinking.

Such language was not easily forgotten, and some years later when it was proposed to set up in the hall a bust of the deceased Marshal this Deputy was heard to exclaim, If the Marshal had treated you as he did me you would not set up a monument to him!

Out of the first meeting of the Provincial Assembly grew a quarrel between Stein and Vincke. I shall not enter into the subject-matter of the dispute, which began in June, 1827, and is raging more hotly than ever in September, 1828. Stein, as usual, sins by over-emphatic expressions for which he later freely apologises, but without being able quite to efface the impression they had left on Vincke's mind. Vincke insists that Stein's expressions are not to be considered as excused by haste or excitement, because 'he had kept a copy of them.' Stein writes:

Am I to appear like Henry IV. before Gregory VII. barefoot in sackcloth, fasting and singing penitential psalms? 'But,' he exclaims, 'a copy of the letter was kept;' he must know that I have always kept and must keep copies of business letters if I am not to write and act inconsistently and desultorily, and especially that this has been, is, and must be done with the recent letters which concern the affairs of the Assembly.

H. v. Vincke may fancy if he likes that he does well to live in war with me; if he wants war I know how to wage it, but only defensive war. I shall wait quietly for the further proceedings he may take under the influence of his family council, and I am not too old to appeal in given circumstances to another instrument besides the pen.

Stein never fought a duel, and plainly declares here that he would never enter into one aggressively, but the descendant of Knights of the Rhine country cannot submit further than this to the maxims of a peaceful age, 'Much enforced, he shows a hasty spark.'

Forty years before, when Stein was Superior President in Westphalia and Vincke a subaltern under him, Vincke had gently criticised his chief by pronouncing him better suited to be Minister than President. Unconsciously Stein now delivers a crushing retort by applying to Vincke a Westphalian proverb and calling him 'a good horse but a bad coachman.'

In November of this year the quarrel, partly by the interference of the Crown Prince, was arranged.

I may close my brief account of these years by inserting a letter which Stein wrote in 1829 to Gneisenau. The latter had written as follows:

> Your shutting yourself up so completely in your Westphalian castle and leading a solitary life is what I cannot approve, and your literary occupations are to my mind no justification. You could pursue them at Berlin, in fact more conveniently considering the great appliances, and one might offer a prize for a dissertation on the question, which is most meritorious, to work beneficially on one's contemporaries by winged words, and help to train the present generation, or to try to piece together the fragments of ancient history from rare documents. For the former task, at any rate, you are qualified as no one else is, and the other could be prosecuted at the same time.

Here was an appeal to Stein's sense of duty, and he answered it in a Memoir written almost as formally as if it had been intended for the King of Prussia or

the Czar. For its autobiographical value I translate the substance of this Memoir.

In the year 1818 I gave an impulse to this undertaking, because I thought it for the honour of the nation to collect and set out properly the monuments of its history, because I considered history an efficacious means of exciting patriotism and sustaining it against the influence of self-interest. I hoped to get the necessary support from the noblesse, and perhaps from the Princes. I declined the offer of a subsidy from the Emperor Alexander which was made me by Capodistrias in the autumn of 1818. But my expectations were either not at all or inadequately realised, and the work could not be undertaken with proper vigour; it makes way very slowly, but at the same time very thoroughly, thanks mainly to the excellent Editor, Pertz, of the Hannoverian Archives, whose merits are recognized by the whole learned world. All the praise and merit belongs to him, and to me only that of the first impulse, and of a money subscription partly furnished by me, partly by some friends, so that if dissertations were written on the question you propose, only a small part of the praise would fall to me, and I should only be liable to be charged with the sin of omission.

But the question rises whether I ought to omit doing as much good as possible by speech or action.

By speech in a private position one can only be influential through a recognized social position, which is gained either by keeping a house which may serve as a centre, or else by skill. I have not the smallest inclination or aptitude for either, my turn for solitude, my love of independence, which amounts to obstinacy, do not allow me to take this course. I should express my opinion without sparing any one, affront and irritate all parties alike, Aristocrats, Bureaucrats and Liberals; they would all turn their backs on me as an old prattler, and neither I nor the cause would gain anything.

A fixed official position I have not got, for when I returned from Russia in 1813 Hardenberg was at the head of affairs—he had ability and ready apprehension, but his pride, his immorality and spirit of intrigue wanted only subordinate tools, no independent or active assistants, so he surrounded himself with people of

the former kind, and held aloof all from whom he could fear contradiction or dissentient opinion.

Here follows the paragraph quoted above about his retirement in 1815. He then continues:

When in 1823 under the Ministry of Voss the Provincial Estates were organised the Crown Prince commanded me to make a report on the subject, but scarcely any attention was paid to it.... All this has led me to the resolution of remaining quietly in my country house, and my province, and not going to Berlin this winter—to be sure the Town Ordinance will come up for discussion in the Council of State, but I do not think I need take part in it, (1) because the plan laid before the Council by the Ministry has my approval in all the important points: (2) because my remarks have been already communicated to Minister v. Schuckmann in 1827 and 1828. They deal with a matter which I should like your Excellency to consider, the formation in the towns of a Society of Notables furnished with the franchise, active and passive, in order to make this sort of election depend not exclusively on property, as it does now, but on intelligence as well.

I do not mean to be inactive, or a mere collator of MSS. and documents, but I would be active in proportion to the position assigned me by Providence, and occupy myself with the affairs of the Province, Circle, and Commune which I inhabit, as Marshal, Member of the Circle, Member of the Commune.

If your Excellency will consider what I have laid before you, you will be disposed, I hope, to believe that I do not consume the remainder of my days in idleness, or absorbed in matters of little immediate practical importance. No doubt much in my present mode of action is caused by my age; it loves rest, my powers decline, the bonds that fetter me to the earth loosen; were I but ten years younger, a journey in winter, a residence in a great town, *seven Courts*, and manifold social duties, would not look at all as they do to me in my seventy-second year.

So far of the occupations in which Stein's last years were spent. They are not of such importance

as to fix our attention at this distance both of time and space. Foreign affairs during this time did not interest him much more strongly than if he had never known what it was to take a part in European affairs. But after the news of Alexander's death had reached him he was found weeping audibly. He had seen the Czar at his best, and had personally owed much to him. He could compare his later conduct not merely, as young Liberalism did, with what might be wished or what might be suitable to a more advanced country, but with the conduct of earlier Czars—for he could distinctly remember twenty years of Catharine and the wild reign of Paul—and he could estimate the progress Alexander himself had made since Tilsit and Erfurt. To him therefore the merits of Alexander continued always greatly to outweigh his faults, and he held that even the policy of the Holy Alliance—so he wrote at this time to Anstett—had been well meant, and that 'we owe to it many years of necessary and restorative rest, an advantage which outweighs all that may be charged with exaggeration and error in the application of it.'

The terrible scenes which accompanied the accession of Nicholas must have interested him deeply, considering his intimate knowledge of Russian affairs. But he scarcely refers to them in his letters, though Gagern tries to draw him out. The occurrence came most home to him when his friend Turgeneff, at this time absent from Russia on a tour through France and England, was accused of a share in the conspiracy, and condemned to death in his absence. A story comes to us from Varnhagen through Pertz

of a scene between Stein and one of Turgeneff's judges, Count Goloffkin, which was witnessed in the house at Nassau by a young man of Frankfurt, whose name is not given. Stein pressed the Count to say whether Turgeneff was really guilty. Goloffkin at last unwillingly admitted 'No, not guilty of anything beyond discontent.' 'Well, but what of the evidence?' said Stein. 'Oh! it was in Russian,' replied Goloffkin, 'and you know, Baron, how we of the Russian nobility that have been educated abroad in the French fashion—'...'Very true,' said Stein, 'but yet you condemned him to death!' 'Mon Dieu,' exclaimed Goloffkin, 'we did not look at it so seriously; of course we all knew that he was safe in foreign parts.' The unnamed witness was deeply struck with the effect which this answer had upon Stein. His face darkened, he stood up, put his hands behind him, and crushing his visitor with the powerful German interjection 'Pfui!—Pfui, Herr Graf, pfui, pfui, Herr Graf!'—began to walk up and down the room as if he were alone or wished to be alone. Goloffkin soon took the opportunity presented by the door opening to make his escape without any ceremony of farewell.

Slight incidents such as this would be all that remained to relate were it not that Stein lived long enough to see a new transformation of the great European scene and the downfall of a fabric which he had helped to build. He lived to see the Revolution of 1830. It so happens that one of those old friends who had passed through the great crisis of 1806, 1807 and 1813 by his side still held intercourse and maintained correspondence with him

when this new crisis arrived. We have lost sight by this time of most of the others. Scharnhorst has long been dead; Gneisenau, we have just seen, is living, but in a time of peace he falls naturally into the background; Humboldt still writes occasionally, but lives for the most part at a distance. Schön he has not once seen since the war, though he had once had a short correspondence with him about setting up the escutcheon of the house of Stein among those of the other German knights at Marienburg. He had again received a letter from him during his visit to Berlin in 1827. I may insert a few sentences from it by way of farewell to Schön, particularly as it comes from the scene of so many of the occurrences recorded in this book, Königsberg.

Königsberg, May 9th, 1827.

Your Excellency is at Berlin, and as I cannot speak to you I must at least greet you with an autograph letter. My heart bids me do this. Often, very often you stand before me, and in my thoughts I talk with you, and at times the longing for an hour or two's conversation with you is very great. God be ever with you!

How the world goes we know, and I tell myself what you say to this and that. The ideal impulse between 1808 and 1815 was so powerful that materialist natures could not keep pace with it; they were but hurried along, and thus to be hurried along is disagreeable, and so begins pulling and pulling, and the age must go back in all countries, but the good God maintains the right, and will do so. Canning and the Laws on the Press! and neither Canning nor the King of France is what Luther was. He too will make his appearance. The first and second meetings of the Provincial Estates here were wonderfully fine. They were elevating, and visibly the people *was* elevated. No King can have a more faithful or a better people, and what ideas have already come to light and been developed! Add that the

harmony of the Estates is most impressive. A single wretched Town-Deputy once forgot himself so far as to utter the word *itio in partes*, and the whole Assembly was in an uproar, and fell upon him, and Dohna and Brandt and several others were for tearing him to pieces with their teeth, to think that the mention of such a thing could be possible in our Assemblies. Where such a temper reigns the people stands again *with God for King and Fatherland.* All the time there was fresh and full life in the discussions. Dohna is now quite in his place, and is greatly honoured. We have been drawn very near together, and our close connexion makes me very happy.

About myself I can only tell you that I am satisfied with the confidence which is shown me on all sides, and want nothing more on earth. Besides the Estates the subsidizing of the Province is a grand affair, which the King has committed to me. It goes on much better than I expected. A check has been put to the decline, and of 400 landowners on my list, of whom I expected 150 to be ruined in spite of the subsidy, I do not yet reckon 2 per cent. I dare say you will hear another story at Berlin, but that comes partly from the bureaucratic barrack, partly it refers to individuals who were bankrupt before 1806, and now want to set themselves on their legs again, so that the question with them is not of maintenance, but of a fresh start. The King has preserved our ancient race, which was lost but for this operation. And it is a fine race! My fatherland is, now that I know it in its inmost elements, more precious to me than ever.

But I wish your Excellency would come to Marienburg, to pray *there.* The Stein coat-of-arms stands above the three granite pillars, and very many see it with pleasure. May Heaven still grant you to live long! SCHÖN.

But one old friend still remained near to Stein; this was Niebuhr. We may conveniently exhibit the effect which the approach and outbreak of the July Revolution produced upon Stein's mind, by taking up the story of his intercourse with Niebuhr at the point where we left it. There is the more reason for adopting this plan that we have through-

out endeavoured to keep Niebuhr in view, and that his political side is nowhere better seen than in his relation to Stein. He is now established at Bonn as Professor, whence in February 1824 he writes to Stein. After amusing himself a little with his friend Dahlmann's crotchet of withdrawing from the Monumenta on account of the Carlsbad Resolutions, he goes on:

I cannot conceal from myself that Liberalism so universally cries Crucify him! about me, and find on all occasions such a universal agreement of our *savants* to treat me as excommunicated and under a ban; perhaps this may explain why Dahlmann will not answer me. Perhaps too he has been hurt by my expressing my surprise at his printing, as the second part of his volume, a very immature composition of another, in which the most monstrous things are uttered with the greatest presumption; *e.g.* a diatribe against Polybius, who is called a sophist, his experience in war and politics named obsolete *Polytechnik*, etc., quite in the style of these gentlemen's wisdom, that they alone with the Constitutionnel and the Allgemeine Zeitung judge infallibly from the tripod, and see much further than we do. The fact is, all this is said against Polybius, but aimed at *me*.

This rather startling glimpse into the secrets of the learned world gives Stein pain, as he says in his answer. He begs Niebuhr to 'struggle against his disposition to melancholy,' and tells him that 'a man of his extraordinary abilities, deep and extensive learning, and noble purity of character, is not to be hurt by the croaking of the frogs in the marsh.' He adds, 'Are you not at times inclined to too much suspicion? I enclose an extract from Dahlmann's letter to Frau v. Löw—he seems to have taken your criticism in a very friendly spirit.' Niebuhr's rejoinder is curious:

Your Excellency is not exposed to a peculiar annoyance which has to be endured in the middle class, I mean the tyranny of mediocrity, which, confiding in its majority of votes, demands submission, and attacks and proscribes as a rebel any one who resists because he knows better, and despises such contemptible tyrants. From this plague I too was free while we lived at Rome, and it is one of the heavy, heavy sacrifices which I made to home-sickness and my wife's antipathy, that I gave up a position which saved me from this accursed equality; I say equality, because now I am only a scholar and an author, to whom the youngest and emptiest may fancy himself at least equal.

He still cannot forgive Dahlmann:

I cannot possibly write to him again, for he has answered with the most haughty anger a few lines which contained nothing but a playful reference to the folly of mixing up the Carlsbad Resolutions with the Collection, and a hint to think twice about such expressions as occur in his letter, 'that he could never have acted with Polybius if he had been his contemporary.' It is a really outrageous self-conceit which rules in a small University and a remote province, where there is endless chattering and Mediocrity has established her throne.

But we begin now to discover the thoughts about the future of Europe which possessed Niebuhr's mind.

I do not despair of my children seeing the commencement of a time when even an imperial Assembly of Estates may really deliberate on business, not on general questions of Freedom of the Press, Trial by Jury, and such rubbish! For whatever reasons the inaction in which Europe is held is aimed at, it is a blessing in any case; gradually we are weaned from the violent stimulants which, since 1789, had grown to be our daily bread, and we learn once more to think about our own personal affairs, and to build and plant for a future, for one's own age, and own children. Only I wish there was no Russia! It is really out of horror at that abominable barbaric Power that I want to settle my children here on the Rhine.

In one of these letters he asks Stein to be godfather to his lately-born son, who unhappily did not live long. Stein graciously accedes to the proposal.

This is the form in which Niebuhr invites Stein to dinner for July 11th:

You write that you will be here on the 11th; may we not hope you will give us the pleasure of sharing our dinner? You will not be annoyed that Marcus' tutor is of the company; but we must appeal to your friendly feeling for your devoted friends not to be shocked at finding us much more closely packed in our present lodging than in the former, so that my wife's sitting-room is nursery and dining-room at the same time. As to the frugality of our meal we should not think of being embarrassed by it in your presence. Thrift assuredly is the basis of freedom.

In November of this year (1824) Niebuhr was named a member of the Council of State. On this occasion he has again 'to struggle against his disposition to melancholy.'

I had hired a lodging, was preparing to buy a spacious house with a large garden, and was in treaty for another fine garden and vineyard. We had not been so cheerful for a long time: we were making plans and building castles in the air, how we would enjoy this life in the coming summer; how Marcus would work hard in the garden. And now like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky comes an Order of Cabinet to announce that the King calls me to the Council of State. The Order was not in the ordinary official style, but unmistakeably issued by the King himself. It dissipated all our dreams for the future, and if it spoilt a life here which we had just grown accustomed to, it created nothing for Berlin. It was nothing but a naked nomination to the Council of State. Had the King come to this resolution in the summer before I left Berlin I might have arranged matters without positive loss, and without having to sacrifice a quiet existence already begun, and with the hope that my position would be made more comfortable for me after a time. But now I felt painfully how Princes do not trouble themselves to ask whether they disturb

and ruin the existence even of those to whom they are well-disposed, how they form resolutions or put them off just as it occurs to them.

Here follows a deplorable picture of the miseries involved in a journey to Berlin. He then adds:

I am sure it will be agreeable to your Excellency that I should write to you from Berlin as soon as I can get a notion of things, and as far as I can do it through the post. From Berlin: whither you summoned me, and where I shall go to the house where you lived, where I saw you for the first time (and your deceased sister, who a little later was so intimate with my sister-in-law), as the Jews went to the site of the Temple of Solomon; it will be provoking to find Klewitz there.

Stein is evidently pained at what seems to him backwardness in the service of the State, but remembers that sacrifices, which to him as a man of property would be slight, might be exceedingly painful to the retired scholar, unable with his humble means to cope with the expense of a Court life. He ventures, however, to exhort Niebuhr 'to forget the slight pecuniary inconvenience,' and says, 'What can become of our state if men with your gifts and in your position, when the King and the wishes of the people call upon them, retreat and resign?' After a little time he takes courage, and preaches his friend a formal sermon in a letter dated December 31st:

One word, one frank and friendly word from an old man who loves you truly, spoken on the last day of the year.

Forget yourself, deny yourself; Providence meant you for something better and greater than the mere enjoyment of domestic bliss, 'working in the garden and vineyard with Marcus,' and so on. You are to devote your powers of mind and will, your force of thought, your great knowledge and pure intentions

to the public weal in strife for truth and right; you will often conquer and often fail, but sooner or later truth makes its way, and you, the statesman, must be supported by the thoughts and prospect that sooner or later, in your life or after your death, through the efforts of the good and opposition of the bad, public opinion will award the laurel of truth asserted by you.

Your position is such that you already influence great national affairs, that you have the confidence of a young man of great abilities and in a happy situation (the Crown Prince), and can influence him by instruction, guidance, encouragement, inspiration; it is a sin to misunderstand this intimation given you by Providence, this indication of your mission. Forget yourself, deny yourself, and pray in humility that He from whom all strength flows will give you strength and courage.

I did not approve your leaving Rome where you had a sphere of useful work; it was compliance with your wife, who now repents it; it was for you, my worthy friend, to guide and cheer your inexperienced, soft, tender, perhaps prejudiced mate, rather than to give way to her. Now comes a new situation, it seems alarming, but look the difficulties in the face, forget yourself, deny yourself, and listen to the will of Providence. It will be easy to gratify your moderate pecuniary wishes; death opens many sources of assistance; for instance, Wolf's death sets free a considerable salary at the Academy.

We have hardly found Stein adopting this tone earlier. He is beginning to assume the privileges of old age, and henceforth we find him at times lecturing his younger friends with the same solemnity. Niebuhr did not allow the justice of the reproof. He writes from Berlin that 'to live here in embarrassment, without office, without having anything to oppose to the insolences of those who would gladly kill me with their looks, merely in order to see the Crown Prince at dinner or in Ancillon's company and so forth (I have not perhaps in the last two months talked to him alone for four hours), and for

this to give up my future life, my peace of mind, the continuation of my History, and the education of my children—duty does not impose all this!' And Stein seems to admit that he is right.

In January, 1827, Niebuhr presents to Stein the new edition of the first volume of his Roman History. He does not expect him to read it all with care, but he names certain chapters which he believes Stein will find interesting. 'You will agree with my comparisons with the laws and institutions of our ancestors; and I flatter myself it will be agreeable to you to see these explained, and many words and expressions of our language that were obsolete or neglected recalled to life....Once more in closing I must recommend my book to you as concerning you nearly. It would never have come into existence if you had not called me to Berlin.' Stein reads the book with great interest and writes, 'What you say about oligarchy is very true....Nevertheless I do not find in the Prussian State any oligarchical arrangements, not in the administrative posts, which are open to all—of the eight Superior Presidents five are *novi homines*, of the four Rhenish Presidents three, and so on; nor yet in the newly-formed knighthood, for it is open to every one who can buy an estate that was before noble; so this spectre need not disquiet us.'

Between this date and the date of the July Revolution scarcely any letters are preserved that passed between Niebuhr and Stein. In the latter days of July, 1830, Stein was at Nassau. Henriette, now Countess v. Giech, and another lady were in the house, but Stein passed much time in the society of

Bodelschwingh, who has since appeared as the author of a Life of Vincke, and was to Stein a friend of some years' standing. When the news arrived of the appearance of the famous Ordonnances, Bodelschwingh and another friend, Liel, from Coblenz, were at his table. The latter, who was well acquainted with Paris, but whose connexions were with the royalist party, was persuaded that there would be no rising; but after dinner Stein remarked to Bodelschwingh, 'I could see that you did not believe what Liel said.' Bodelschwingh admitted it, and gave his reasons, upon which Stein twitted him with his incredulity, appearing himself to feel no alarm.

The next day Bodelschwingh drove very early to Ems, and returned about eight o'clock to Nassau. Stein was sitting under the chestnuts in his garden, drinking coffee. As Bodelschwingh approached he called out, 'What news?' The answer was, 'Revolution in Paris.' He was visibly moved, listened to all the details Bodelschwingh had been able to collect, and then said, 'And so the wicked nation is to throw Europe into confusion a second time! Well! if they must and would break loose, all I can say is, I wish they had waited till I was dead!'

When we look back upon the Revolution of 1830 we may perhaps wonder what could lead a man of enlarged mind such as Stein to regard it with so much alarm. After that of 1688 the Revolution of 1830 may be called the pattern Revolution. It shed little blood, it transgressed legality no further than was necessary, and by a contrivance which at the time seemed very happy, it saved monarchy and even the respect due to the ancient family. What

was there in such a movement as this to frighten the daring reformer of 1807 and 1813?

We cannot raise this question without being reminded of Niebuhr, for if Stein was startled, Niebuhr was affected by the July Revolution with a despair which is often said to have shortened his days. Not on receiving the first news, when it was perhaps reasonable to anticipate terrible scenes, but on October 5th, when the Revolution had already displayed all those features which made it the admiration of Liberals all over the world, and when the new Government had restored order, Niebuhr wrote the following remarkable sentences in the Preface to the second volume of his Roman History:

> At another season this delay (the delay caused by a fire which destroyed his house at Bonn) would have had no influence on the execution of my work. But only two-thirds of it were completed when the madness of the French Court burst the talisman which kept the demon of the Revolution in bonds. The remainder has been written under a feeling that it was a duty not to leave what I had begun unfinished, amid constant efforts to repel the harassing anxiety ever pressing upon me from the prospect of the ruin which menaced my property, my dearest possessions, and my happiest ties. The first volume was written when everything was smiling around me, and I was thankfully and heartily enjoying it in perfect unconcern about the future. Now, unless God send us some miraculous help, we have to look forward to a period of destruction, similar to that which the Roman world experienced about the middle of the third century of our era—to the annihilation of prosperity, of freedom, of civility, of knowledge. Still, even though barbarism should for a long time scare the Muses and learning entirely away, a time will come when Roman history will again be an object of attention and interest, though not in the same manner as in the 15th century.

It seems to me worth while to examine with some attention this singular prediction, which took all the world by surprise. We may observe, first, that it consists of two parts, both of which may surprise an English reader, but of which only one could be surprising to the Germans of the time. That an age of barbarism like that of the decline of the Roman Empire was approaching, was an opinion which Niebuhr had almost to himself; but if he fears for his property and possessions, this is simply because he was living in the midst of that Rhine Province which had been wrested from the first Revolution, and was likely enough to be reclaimed by the second. By the demon of the Revolution, which he declares to be unchained, he does not mean extravagant opinions or Republicanism, but the lust of conquest to which Germany had been a victim in his youth. This had indeed no necessary connexion with Revolution, and Niebuhr had fancied the year before that he saw it lurking in the minds of the then triumphant royalist party. Thus in September, 1829, he had written, 'That the French, and now more especially the so-called royalist party, harbour the idea of reconquering the Rhine frontier is by no means doubtful to us in these parts, nor yet a secret. Even in this University there are persons well known to be in communication with the priests in France, who are seeking to excite rebellion against the heretical Government, attempts which would be simply laughable if it were not for the unsatisfactory aspect of things in Belgium.' But it was natural to think that such aggressive designs would receive an enormous impetus from Revolution. It seemed

impossible but that the Revolution, as soon as it raised its head again, should demand back those conquests which were its own, and of which France held herself to have been unjustly deprived, Belgium and the Left Bank of the Rhine; and it would be favoured in this enterprise by the fact that the state of Belgium in 1830 was startlingly similar to its condition in 1790. The King of the Netherlands had played over again precisely the part of the Emperor Joseph, and a Revolution was preparing in Belgium which closely corresponds to the Brabant Revolution of 1789. History rarely repeats itself with such fidelity, and there was accordingly nothing unreasonable in Niebuhr's fear for his property. Disturbances actually did take place at Aix-la-Chapelle, and nothing could seem more probable than that a French army would soon appear to achieve the annexation both of Rhine Prussia and Belgium. This no doubt was the apprehension which flashed through Stein's mind when he heard the news under the chestnut tree at Nassau, and it is expressed now and then in his letters of this time, though in less lugubrious language than Niebuhr uses, and chiefly in the form of invectives against the French. Thus: 'We must look to the healthy good sense of the nation; but on the other side we have everything to fear from their vanity and their want of religion.' And again: 'In France the party struggles continue, people are tired already of the present Ministry, and want one more democratic, a more democratic Chamber, &c.; it is a vain, heartless, selfish, rapacious people, *irreligious, the devil take them!*'

So far, then, Stein and Niebuhr agree, but in other points they differ. Niebuhr is often spoken of as reactionary; and it is true that he is in the habit of speaking contemptuously of Liberalism; but it is worth observing that much as he laments the July Revolution, and despondently as he regards the future, his judgment on the Paris proceedings is identical with that of the Liberals. He praises those who have made the Revolution, and execrates the party of the King. Thus on August 16th he writes: 'I will not deny that I think the Parisians heroic, the moderation of the victors not simply theatrical, and the discretion of the Deputies, even of the extreme Left, worthy of high respect. Everything has gone on better than in 1789, and by this it is evident that the nation has really improved.' Again on August 4th: 'The people have proved themselves more manly than I thought. The insult to the citizens of depriving them of the right to vote hitherto obtained by taking out a license to trade, the fear of retaining only a phantom of representation which might be used to procure a sanction to the most odious decrees, and abhorrence of the priests, have all combined to drive the people to madness.' Whom then does he blame? Always and alone he blames the Reaction. Here is a specimen of his language, August 16th:

Neither does it avail anything to curse those who have made it inevitable, who have exorcised and conjured till the spectre which they thought to lay has risen out of the earth and annihilated them. I have delivered my sentiments upon this subject publicly; on the impiousness of the jesuitico-aristocratic factions which took their rise in 1821, and how they ought to be exe-

crated; but it has been without effect. Still every honest man whose voice has any weight whatever is bound to cry aloud against the sympathy and commiseration expressed for fallen majesty.

Thus Niebuhr approves the conduct of the Revolutionists, and execrates that of the Royalists, and yet he holds the Revolution a fatal event, likely to introduce a long period of barbarism. Before we inquire how he could be led to take up a position so singular, let us observe that Stein's view is different, and in this case much more like that of an ordinary Conservative. He lays the fault on the Liberals, and though he does not for a moment defend the King, yet he believes him to have been well-meaning, and to have resorted to his *coup d'état* in despair at the perverse opposition of the Liberals who, he sometimes hints, were from the outset aiming at Revolution. This divergence of opinion is expressed in the following letters, the last that ever passed between Stein and Niebuhr.

August 27th. I was afraid that your Excellency had not yet received my Minor Writings....Pardon the delay, and give some attention to my father's life if you did not read it in the first edition as a separate work. The rest, I must confess, only concerns the leading men of my own special department.

A fearful future close at hand now threatens us. The monster is loose, and for the second time no power can bind it. The Revolution seems to me all the more irresistible now, because it is accomplished without enthusiasm, without utopias, as a mere matter of course, and no courage withstands it. The priests and a senseless perverse aristocracy have alienated every one, not only in France. Here the stupid fanatics were already soothing themselves with dreams of a religious war, and of the overthrow of Protestantism; insulting words prompting to rebellion were uttered from the Professor's chair. Here, as in Belgium,

intrigues were carried on with the *parti prêtre* in France.... There are moments when confessions of faith may be made without ridiculous solemnity. Mine is that had I been a French Deputy I should have belonged to the party Agiers, only I should not have voted for the Address, but I should have been for the resistance to the Ordonnances, should have signed the Protests, and chosen another King; but all this I should have done on account of the absolute impossibility of acting otherwise, with the bitterest conviction that any modification of the Charter was ruin, and that those adopted would have been extorted by insurrection if they had not been acquiesced in.

How many more months shall we live here in quiet? Meanwhile I am very industrious. In October I hope you will get the second volume of the History, and then the third will soon go to press. Since the calamity which overtook our house I have not had the courage to leave wife and children, even for a few days; otherwise I should take the liberty of visiting your Excellency in the holidays.

To this Stein answers as follows, after acknowledging the receipt of Niebuhr's Minor Writings:

The Liberals and the part of the aristocracy that is connected with them are even more to blame than the *parti prêtre* and a perverse aristocracy for the present subversion of legal order in France.

The best proof that the priestly party was not to be feared is the weakness it betrays on all occasions, for the spectre of Jesuitism that was dressed up so terribly in Villèle's time vanished when Valismenil &c. retired without opposition; the *parti prêtre* could neither hinder the absurd Address nor command the elections in 1830; it succumbed, and now it is persecuted and despised.

But the Liberals, composed of very different elements, were indefatigable in undermining the royal power, in terrifying the credulous crowd with a spectre of despotism, priesthood, and aristocracy, and in hampering the administration. They turned out the Villèle Ministry which had adroitness and business ability, the Martignac Ministry which gave the Law of the Press and the Law of Elections and wanted to give a tolerable Law of

Communes, and by these unprincipled tactics drove the old *dévot* King to throw himself into the arms of an absolutist, of whom one of his friends wrote to me in December, 1829, 'He is noble, but narrow and obstinate.'...

Had I been a French Deputy I should have striven with all my might to maintain the royal power which had been shaken by the spirit of the age and the whole condition of things.

In no case would I have permitted myself to choose another King,—I should have had no competence to do so. The Liberal *jus publicum* no doubt calls legitimacy a *niaiserie*, but by similar metapolitical arguments one might arrive to call property, inheritance, right of testation, a *niaiserie*.

If there are fools at Bonn who speak from the Professor's chair of religious war, and overthrow of Protestantism, I was assured by some people at Coblenz that the Prussian Government wanted to protestantise the Catholics. The Prussian Government ought, without troubling itself about the one or aiming at the other, to redress the well-grounded grievances of the Rhenish Province; they concern the maladroit treatment of the Church affairs of both confessions, want of plan, want of energy, deficiency in tact, nepotistic appointment of mediocre men from the Eastern Provinces to posts, ejection of natives, continuance of the provisional condition in legislation, bad appointments to vacant Professorships at Bonn, etc.

If these grievances were redressed, a few dreamers in Bonn Chairs, or a few chatterers in restaurants at Coblenz might prattle; but who would trouble himself about their nonsense?

Thus we see that Stein cannot reconcile himself to the change of dynasty, and seems almost to lay down principles which would condemn the Revolution of 1688. He had indeed been himself condemned as a Revolutionist in 1813, and we have seen reason to think that the divine right of Frederick William would scarcely have stopped him if it had stood in the way of the independence of Prussia. But as we have seen he was a patriot far more decidedly than he was a libertarian, and wide and free

as were his political views, he belonged by the whole course of his life and studies to the monarchical and Germanic world. He has therefore scruples which do not occur to Niebuhr, whose imagination dwelt so much in the republics of antiquity.

The reader will find it a matter of course that he expresses his dissent uncompromisingly and without superfluous compliments; otherwise the letter seems perfectly courteous and friendly. But it produced a curious effect on Niebuhr. In a long and interesting letter which he wrote to Pertz on November 19th, and from which we see how soon he expected to have his house surrounded with soldiers,—'there can be no worse position than that of a town between two principal fortresses upon which our armies cannot but be driven back, even granting the most favourable result in the end'—occurs this passage:

The end of it all is that Germany, trampled down and torn to pieces, will pass under the yoke of the barbarians and of the foreigners. And how many to whom one wishes well will sin in such a time! Others, on the contrary, will senselessly declare for the priests and noble party who have done it all. So for instance just now H. vom Stein has written me a letter as senseless as it is insolent, because I had candidly expressed my opinion to him. He gives me to understand that the King must dismiss me (among others) from the University. No doubt a nobleman connected with the aristocratic rebels in Belgium has told him so.

This passage explains another which occurs in a letter written by him on October 7th:

While I was lamenting over these infatuated revolutionists I received a bullying letter from ——, because, having occasion to write to him, I had freely declared that this resuscitation of the Revolution was entirely to be ascribed to the priestly party and a

perverse aristocracy. He flies at me as if he would tear me to pieces for seeing such phantoms and defending the Liberals. There is a priestly-aristocratic party here, small in numbers, but which has a nest in Coblenz, by which he suffers himself to be befooled. However dear the friendship of any man may be to me, I cannot purchase its continuance at the sacrifice of truth.

As Pertz remarks, Niebuhr seems entirely to misunderstand Stein's allusions to Professors at Bonn when he imagines them pointed at himself. It was Niebuhr himself who had first introduced these Professors when he said that some of them had uttered words prompting to rebellion. Stein does indeed hint that there had been excesses on the Protestant side as well as on the Catholic, and it was not unnatural for Niebuhr to suppose that the allusion was to his own lectures, for he says expressly in a letter of September 27th, 'Towards the end of my lectures, induced by the complaints made by young Protestants of the attempts to stir up sedition among them, I publicly attacked this treasonable spirit;' but certainly nothing can be found in Stein's letter at all answering Niebuhr's description, 'He gives me to understand that the King must dismiss me (among others) from the University.'

It is painful to find the long friendship of two such men closing with another discord, but as in the affair of 1813, there is some reason to hope that Stein never knew what Niebuhr was thinking and writing about him. But it is time to inquire how Niebuhr, who is so bitterly hostile to the party of priests and aristocrats, could take so despairing a view of the Revolution by which that party was signally discomfited. Partly, no doubt, he is afraid

as a German of anything which may restore France to a sense of her power, because he believes that it will lead directly to a new invasion of Germany. Thus in 1828 he had been in like manner afraid of the Restoration Monarchy becoming firmly established. He wrote (March 14th): 'It is also possible that new parties may be formed, as was the case in England under the House of Hannover, which may really keep themselves within constitutional limits. If so, France will become conscious of her power, and then woe to poor divided and decaying Germany!' In the same spirit he wrote at the end of 1830:

> When we contemplate the present, when we look at the tiger in the West waiting with glaring eyes to pounce upon his prey, and at the tone of feeling pervading all Germany (with the exception for the most part of our old provinces), which furthers the design of the enemy, dissolves all bonds, makes resistance impossible, opens outstretched arms to the French—'Give us freedom,' they say, 'and we are ready to withstand the foreigner;' but their freedom is chaos and the sway of madmen or fools; and since their demands neither can nor will be granted, and there is no great man living to win the people to himself and carry them away with him, to all human foresight the loss of the Left Bank of the Rhine to France, the inundation of the rest of Germany by French hordes, the destruction of the existing States, and the formation of servile republics under the guidance of traitors, have become quite inevitable after the insurrection of the Poles.

This is a melancholy forecast, yet even this falls short of that vision of a return of barbarism, which he expressed in the preface above quoted. Niebuhr died in the persuasion that the tendency of modern society was towards barbarism! There are many to whom this will seem the very madness of hypochon-

dria. Let us at least inquire what he had in his mind, for it is certain that this vision appeared to him with singular vividness and distinctness. It seems then that what struck him was the opening of the Social Question. Others saw in the July Revolution a struggle for constitutional liberty remarkably like 'the glorious bloodless Revolution of 1688,' displaying the same moderation and masterly power of acquiescing in a compromise. Now Niebuhr too admired and approved the Revolution of 1688. He says (October 7th), 'My conviction is, that before the despotism of Liberalism became all-powerful, there were perfectly justifiable Revolutions in which one power was victorious in the struggle with another power, as in England and the Netherlands.' But in the July Revolution he saw something wholly different, disguised under the appearance of a new 1688. He saw a social movement concealed behind the political one. Thus he wrote at the end of November:

The truth of the thing is the unveiled destitution of the populace, who are resolved to bear it no longer; and this again paves the way for a revision of property; which is not indeed something new under the sun, but has been unheard of for centuries past, and even now seems quite inconceivable to our politicians, who have set property in the place of God, in the Holy of Holies. We have fallen into the state of Rome after the times of the Gracchi with all its horrors, and he who cannot see this is blind; he who thinks the question has anything to do with freedom is a fool; forms will no longer hold things together; we shall bless despotism if it protects our lives, as the Romans blessed that of Augustus. That it was possible for reasonable men to do this I had comprehended long ago; now it is perfectly vividly clear to me; and now also I understand Catiline.

Such was Niebuhr's despair. He expected to see despotism called in as a defence against socialism. His terror is not that of the 'moneyed worldling,' for in this very passage he sneers at those who think property the most sacred thing in the world. But he bears in mind how the Social Question was opened at Rome by the Gracchi, and how that occurrence sharply divides the glorious age of Rome from the melancholy one, and begins a long period which opened in bloody civil war, proceeded in Imperialism, and ended in a general ruin of culture and civilisation.

We may strongly suspect that he allowed too much weight to this single historical example, and certainly for some time there was no sign that his prophecy was likely to be fulfilled. The general war that seemed in 1830 almost certain to break out was averted, and a period of tranquillity and prosperity followed. Yet if Niebuhr could now return to the earth he would perhaps not admit that he had been proved to be mistaken. The halo has faded from the July Revolution since the throne which it established was overturned. Since 1848 the history of France has taken very much the course which he anticipated. Socialism has there led to Imperialism. The reign of Louis Napoleon is a phenomenon precisely such as he foresaw. He would perhaps point also to the most recent phase of German History as a confirmation of his views. Socialism has spread there so widely that Bamberger lays it down that Germany is 'the classical land of the conflict of classes.' Authority is even now called in against it, and the old prerogative of the Hohenzollerns which

has appeared in this book as accomplishing those emancipations which in other lands have been extorted by popular insurrection, may again be appealed to by terrified wealth as the name of Napoleon was appealed to after the terrible days of June.

We are happy to find Niebuhr's predictions less strikingly fulfilled in the case of England. To him England seemed further advanced than any other state upon the downward course. 'England's rapidly accelerating decline,' he writes (March 14th, 1828), 'is a very remarkable and mournful phenomenon; it is a mortal sickness for which there is no remedy. I liken the English of the present day to the Romans of the third century after Christ.' Again, immediately after the July Revolution, 'One of the leaders of the English Radicals has sent me a clever pamphlet, the inflammatory tendency of which is shown still more by the vignette than the contents: a repulsively ugly woman, whose head-dress is composed of the crown and mitre combined, is feeding with a spoon a bloated child, already deformed by over-feeding, while five starving and ragged children are standing below crying piteously for food, or sitting in sullen despair on the ground. This is in truth a picture of society in England. God grant that it may not come to this with us also!'

Stein took an equally dark view of the condition of England. In November, 1828, he had written:

> The state of England seems to me very serious; a Church, the Anglican, confronting stiffly and oppressively the Nonconformist half of the people, its clergy for the most part non-resident, that is distant from the scene of their vocation, and not troubling themselves about it, a noblesse that has almost monopolised landed

property, and by its Corn Laws drives bread to a price almost twice as high as with us, a population half of which is crowded into the towns, and so becomes dependent on all the accidents of trade and commerce, and is exposed to the most crushing want; a steady persistency in injustice towards six million Irish Catholics, whose treatment exhibits scenes of murder, persecution, spoliation unparalleled in the 16th and 17th centuries, all caused by legislation, which ought to protect life and property; an enormous national debt, and at the top of the Government a King dropsical and exhausted by sensuality, a successor in bad health, and after his near decease a child, a minority.

He goes on, however, to reckon up some circumstances which made in our favour, and does not, like Niebuhr, pronounce the case to be without remedy.

Without boasting much of what has been accomplished in England since that time, we may still feel clear that Niebuhr's 'burden of England' has not proved a true prophecy, and that he would himself retract it if he could come again among us.

Such were the dreary and painful thoughts and views of Niebuhr and Stein when their earthly intercourse came to an end. Niebuhr died at the beginning of 1831. It has often been said that the Revolution and his own gloomy imagination broke his heart. And indeed the passionate expressions which occasionally occur in his last letters might seem to confirm this view. Thus, for instance, he wrote on October 7th, 'I have not experienced such a paralysis of the soul since 1806, 1807, as during the last five or six weeks. Even in 1806, 1807, when calamities we now only foresee had actually occurred, I did not feel so vulnerable to the strokes of fate as I do now.' Still when we consider the variety of subjects which continued to occupy his

active mind, and remember that the evils he foresaw were in great part remote and of gradual approach; while the danger of war on the Rhine diminished as the new dynasty established itself, it is hard to accept this account. After all 1830 was a trifle compared to many years that Niebuhr could remember. He had witnessed the bombardment of Copenhagen, the general downfall that followed Jena, the despair of Tilsit, the march of the French armies into Russia, and all the vicissitudes of 1813. He was already a married man when the earliest of these shocks fell upon him, and he had not yet become an old man in 1831. In these circumstances a broken heart seems an improbable hypothesis, though I have myself above, in an *obiter dictum*, adopted it. There is nothing to corroborate it in the account of the illness which carried him off, and considering the eagerness of mankind to accept anything so pathetic, there is certainly room for a misgiving. Rosalind's lively sally occurs to us; we need not paraphrase the first sentence of it, or say 'No! No! men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not of a broken heart,' but perhaps we may paraphrase the rest of it, 'As for Niebuhr, poor man! he stayed but out one winter night to read the newspapers, and being taken with a chill died of inflammation of the lungs, and the silly chroniclers of the age found it was—the French Revolution.'

Certainly the Revolution produced no similar effect on Stein, though it made him also anxious. He differed from his friend as Pitt from Burke, or as the statesman from the prophet. He was content with the present, and had neither the wish nor

the power to embrace the distant future in his contemplations. He continued through the few months of life that remained to him to watch the new world which was shaping itself not for him but only for his descendants, and to give his opinion in the same cheerful tone as in the days when the French Revolution seemed a thing of the past. He comments but slightly on the death of Niebuhr, asks after his family, pronounces him a great scholar and an excellent man. His words betray no knowledge of having so lately given him offence. They show, perhaps, something of the indifference natural to one who, by the near view of death, has grown so naturalised in the other world, that he feels himself rather to gain than to lose something when a friend enters it.

And thus we leave behind us the generation which had witnessed Stein's great deeds. On the other hand, as we turn over his latest correspondence, we find him at times holding intercourse with those rising men who were to be the glory of the next age. Among these was the first King of the Belgians.

This series of letters has been recently brought into notice by the Life of Baron Stockmar. Stockmar himself had made Stein's acquaintance before the end of the war. During the greater part of 1814 he had acted as a surgeon in the hospitals at Mainz, Worms, and some other towns, which were under the direction of Stein as Head of the Central Department. His biographer writes:

It was during this period that Stockmar first came across Stein, and that in no friendly manner. The military hospital at Worms

had for a long time been empty, and Stockmar, as a physician, did his duty in admitting to it the wounded French prisoners. Immediately afterwards a whole stream of German wounded chanced to pour in, but the hospital was full. Stein in his wonted hasty manner blazed up, and there was an exchange of hot words, in which Stockmar by no means lagged behind. Still this first acquaintance with Stein left on Stockmar the impression of a very great individuality. Many years afterwards, on his way from England, he paid a visit to the great statesman, and was astonished at the intimate acquaintance he displayed with English affairs.

It was not on the subject of his Belgian Monarchy that Stockmar's patron, Leopold, entered into correspondence with Stein, but on the less interesting subject of his earlier negotiations about the Monarchy of Greece. To us this subject is less interesting, because it is unconnected with the series of events with which this book has been occupied, whereas the new arrangement in Belgium was the event which continued that series. After observing how easily the July Revolution, followed so closely by the Revolution in Belgium, might have opened the burning question of the natural frontiers of France, and thus renewed the European war, we should proceed most naturally to consider how this danger was averted, namely, by the creation of the Belgian Monarchy, and by Leopold's successful management of it. But Stein scarcely lived to see the beginning of this. On the other hand, he was for the moment much interested in the proposal which Leopold had under consideration at the beginning of the year 1830. The prospect of Greece falling into the hands of a German prince roused his German patriotism. He met the Prince at Ems, and conversed with him on the subject; and when the three Powers,

England, Russia, and France, nominated Leopold to the Monarchy of Greece, Stein addressed to him (March 19, 1830) a long letter. After some congratulations, he sketches the history of the Greek question as follows:

> The Greek affair was treated coldly by the Cabinets in the year 1821, as growing out of Jacobinism, but public opinion declared itself for it, in Germany at once, later in France, and last of all in England. From Germany came contributions; many young and older people, distinguished military men, fought for the Greek cause; authors, poets (*e.g.* Müller) kindled enthusiasm, and finally England expressed her sympathy, by loans at high interest, by a sea-fight, brilliant but declared to be 'untoward,' and by anxious, hampering negotiations, with the ideas of an Hospodarate, an annexation of Candia. In later years France took up the Greek cause with love, and has influenced it at once benevolently and beneficially; Russia's victories decided the question.

He then lays it down that the Prince will only succeed in his enterprise by 'a wise choice of the elements of civilisation, a constitution both national and municipal, an education scientific and religious, and a military system,' and proceeds to raise the question, whether in the system of education adopted, the forms and literature which ought to predominate were the English, French, or German? French literature he pronounces irreligious and sensual, and on the political side 'chaotic, eccentric, and impregnated with party spirit,' throughout it is not founded on an earnest philosophy, or a sound philology, or a historical jurisprudence; this is admitted by their newest writers, Cousin and Guizot. Moreover, in France, elementary education is very defective.

English literature has, with the exception of Byron, a serious, truthful, and religious character, which has an elevating influence, but its philosophy and philology are less advanced than the German; its older Universities stagnate, better institutions of the same sort are in process of being established (the London University?).

Hence he infers that German culture ought to have the preference, and advises that young Greeks should be encouraged to resort to German Universities and Gymnasia, and that some distinguished German scholars and teachers should be invited to go to Greece.

He then passes to military questions, and writes as follows:

> The great European Powers were forced by uninterrupted wars between 1792 and 1815 to remodel their military systems. Those of the Prussian Monarchy owe their origin to a man whose noble character was disciplined by science, experience and reflexion, who was profoundly modest and devotedly patriotic, General v. Scharnhorst, who was killed at Gross-Görschen in May, 1813. His coadjutors were Marshal Gneisenau and General Grolmann. The principal features of this system still remain, and they evinced their excellence by this proof, among others, that they raised the character of the Prussian officers by diffusing among them scientific culture, and expelling ignorance and vulgarity.

He recommends, therefore, not only the adoption of the German military system in preference to the French, but the formation of a German guard; and he reports that Lützow, the famous commander of the volunteers of 1813, is ready to undertake this task. He then remarks, that it will certainly be agreeable to the views of Russia that German

influence should prevail in Greece, 'for that great Empire, whence have come all measures for the improvement of the lot of Greece since the alarm about the influence of Carbonarism subsided, has ever since Peter the Great made German culture its model.'

The Prince sends a very cordial and reverential answer to this letter on April 10th, but two months later he writes again to explain his abandonment of the enterprise in consequence of the unsatisfactory frontier decreed to the new Kingdom by the Powers; he remarks, 'The last time we talked together on this subject you preached to me that I should not take the affair in hand without sufficient means.' Stein, however, will not admit that his advice has been followed, but answers sullenly on June 23rd:

I learnt from the documents printed in the public papers of your Royal Highness' renunciation of the sovereignty of the new Greek State; I learnt it with sincere compassion for the Greeks, who have long wanted the blessings of a Government possessed of unity and vigour, and for your Royal Highness, since you lose an honourable and beneficial vocation. The Greek cause will continue under that protection of Divine Providence which has enabled her to develop herself in the midst of a bloody contest with a superior enemy, and in spite of the hindrances put in her way till 1829 by all the European Powers. Was not even the decisive battle of Navarino called 'untoward'?

When the Emperor Alexander, in 1812, began the struggle with Napoleon, he chose for his motto, 'Confiance en Dieu, Courage, Persévérance, Union,' and 'with the eye of faith which in firmness and courage looks up to heaven,' abandoned himself to the suggestions of his noble and magnanimous heart, and struck the giant to the earth.

Human reason can grasp what lies nearest, but not penetrate the darkness of the remote future; there we must be guided by a sense of duty, confidence in God, resistance to selfish thoughts.

Is the condition of Greece improved by the renunciation of your Royal Highness? With earnestness and perseverance might not an alteration of the frontier have been expected either now or in time, and meanwhile was not their security assured by the guarantee of the Three Powers?

Perhaps your Royal Highness found additional motives to your resolution in your English relations. You renounced a career which was certainly dangerous, difficult, adventurous, but now you involve yourself in the struggle of parties, and become a witness of their game of intrigue for ascendancy, influence, &c.

In other letters, written about the same time, the Prince is spoken of as a man 'rather prudent than energetic,' and the following passage was written about a week before the above:

What do you say to the conduct of Prince Leopold? It is quite in the character of Marquis Peu-à-Peu—as King George IV called him—instead of removing the difficulties, instead of finishing the task he had begun, he withdraws his hand like a coward from the plough, reckoning on changes which will follow the approaching death of George IV. A man of this unenergetic character is entirely unfitted to make any mark in life; he has no colour.

Leopold lived to refute this prediction, and Stockmar's biographer has a right to point out how much may be said in defence of the particular act which moved Stein's contempt. But he does not deny that Leopold had put himself in a false position, so that Stein, who had not the evidence that we have of his energy and ability, might naturally judge his character unfavourably, especially considering how different it was from his own. There is perhaps not much appositeness in his appeal to the example of Alexander; but it is fair to remember that we are reading the words of an old man, who loses himself too carelessly in favourite remembrances.

The last months of Stein's life were by no means inactive. He found himself in that part of the Monarchy which was most disturbed by the shock of the Revolutions in France and Belgium. From Nassau he could observe closely the Prussian Rhine Province, which was not only locally nearest to the scenes of disturbance, but was full of Catholics, who sympathised with that Catholic party which took the lead in the Belgian Revolution. Westphalia also was much disturbed. Here lay the old ecclesiastical State of Münster, which, as we remember, had been annexed to Prussia in 1803, and where the Catholic spirit was still active. There were disturbances also at Cassel, of which he heard from Marianne, and in Brunswick, where Pertz witnessed the destruction of the most valuable treasures of the Archives of Henry the Lion.

Near the end of the year it came to Stein's ears that an attack upon Cappenberg was discussed among the unquiet spirits who frequented the public-houses of Borck. He sent for his agent Poock, and told him that he had heard that 500 men were to invade the mansion that very evening; he was determined that it should be defended to the last man, and desired that every gun in the house should be loaded. Poock was able to assure him that there was no fear: he had been in Borck that morning and had heard the rumour, but was sure that it arose from mere drunken bravado. Stein declared himself glad to hear it, but seemed to dwell with some enjoyment upon the defensible character of the house, and the possibility of shooting a hundred men out of the windows before one of the garrison could be hit.

The Estates of Westphalia were to meet for the third time in December. Stein had declined, on the ground of health, to accept this time the nomination to the post of Marshal, a laborious office, and, as his friend W. v. Humboldt said, not important enough to be held by him. But in the dangerous crisis of the moment his refusal was felt to be a blow to the Government. The Crown Prince wrote asking him to reconsider his decision, and the King sent a Cabinet Order, dated October 30th, conferring the office upon him, but nominating at the same time Baron v. Landsberg-Vehlen to act as his Deputy. Stein accepted this arrangement. He wrote to Landsberg as follows:

> Over-anxiety about my health is not among my numerous faults; in fact I have often neglected it, not considering how exaggerated was my confidence in its soundness, nor yet my advanced age, and I was punished in the winter of 1829 by a dangerous, and in 1830 by a tedious, illness. One symptom of decay is a propensity to giddiness, which sometimes leads to unconsciousness, lasting for hours, and comes on particularly from cold or in an air corrupted by a crowd, or by cookery, &c.; so I am forced to avoid such conditions.

But characteristically he handed over to his Deputy all the formalities of the office, and reserved to himself a good deal of the substantial work. He announced that he should arrive the day after the solemn opening of the Assembly, and depart the day before the public scene of its dissolution. Accordingly on December 13th he entered upon his duties.

That the crisis was serious appeared when, on the 20th, a proposal was made to petition the King

for the creation of a States-General (Reichsstände). Stein, who had been from the outset not only convinced of the necessity of such a measure, but indignant at the indefinite postponement of it as a breach of the Royal promise, nevertheless at once interposed, and declared that

he held it improper at so disturbed a time to address the King's Majesty on the subject of the summoning of a States-General and the promulgation of a law for that purpose. He considered that on the one hand the public mind was too much excited, and on the other the war and the defence of the State against the foreigner so entirely claimed the attention of the King and the highest authorities, that they could not consider the formation of an internal Constitution. It was therefore indispensably necessary, before referring this momentous question to the Committee, to deliberate in full assembly whether it was a proper question, in the actual circumstances and general position of the Estates, to be discussed in the Committee, and brought before the King.

After a discussion, in which the Deputy and others supported Stein's view, he put to the vote the question he had raised, when it was carried against him by 37 to 28, that the matter was proper to be discussed in Committee.

Meanwhile, the King had some months before, in consideration of the disturbed state of his western provinces, named his brother, Prince Wilhelm, Governor-General of the Rhine Province and Westphalia. Stein had regarded this step with much approbation, but the arrival of the Prince had been delayed by a sudden illness which seized him. Just after the opening of the Estates, however, he wrote to Stein announcing that he was on the point of setting out for Cologne, which was to be his seat of government. Stein begged him, in his answer, to

take Münster on his way, in order that the leading members of the Estates might be introduced to him. The Prince had not been able to do so, but he wrote from Iserlohn on January 3rd, 1831, commenting on the proposal which had been made in the Estates. He agreed with Stein in thinking it inopportune; it would seem like taking advantage of the ferment in Europe to remind His Majesty just at this moment of his promise, which he will no doubt keep, just because he has given it. He said that he would gladly undertake to report to the King the wishes of his subjects, and that perhaps inconveniences might be avoided if the Estates could communicate them to him *confidentially*. In accordance with this suggestion, when the question came again before the Estates on January 10th, Landsberg came forward and said that he was convinced that any direct mooting of the question would give offence to the King, but on the other hand the deliberations of the Estates were of great importance, and it was most desirable to make known to his Majesty the substance of them. He then proceeded to say:

> Accidental circumstances afford a suitable means of doing this. Our honourable Assembly has the happiness of having at its head a man who himself had his share in founding the manifold institutions of the Prussian State, and whose truly patriotic views have been gloriously proved in the most difficult circumstances. The Province has the happiness of honouring in the King's representative his august brother, whose noble sentiments are so well known.

Accordingly he suggested that the Marshal of the Estates should be requested to lay the substance

of their deliberation before Prince Wilhelm, and to say that they had indeed wished to beg his Majesty to summon a States-General, but that convinced as they were that his Majesty had the matter in his thoughts, and would gratify their wishes at the proper season, they had refrained from indulging their wish at the present disturbed time, but that they begged his Royal Highness to take the matter under his charge, and make His Majesty acquainted with the views and feelings of the Westphalian Estates. Stein left the chair while this proposal was debated. It was carried, and an address to him embodying the views of the Assembly was then resolved on. The passage in which this address passes judgment on the system of Provincial Estates is important enough to be given here.

It cannot be questioned that a system which makes every law causing any alteration in either personal or real rights, that is almost every law, dependent on the successive deliberations of eight different provincial Assemblies, can scarcely satisfy the pressing requirements of the time, which imperatively demand a firm, consecutive, and thorough regulation of rights and administration. It is moreover deeply and painfully felt that the institution of Provincial Estates, in spite of the efforts of the members, has hitherto failed to acquire that degree of public confidence and sympathy which is urgently necessary for such an institution and may indeed be called its vital breath. This discouraging fact is undoubtedly caused both by the apparent insignificance of the results hitherto produced, and by the strict secrecy of the deliberations, the results of which do not generally become known till late, or in a disfigured, deceptive, legendary form.

It is added that

The Assembly proudly recognises that in your Excellency they have a fitting organ for the expression of so great a request, since the time when you were placed at the head of the administration

stands out in Prussian history as the gladsome morning of liberal ideas and institutions, and as such ideas have continued to find in your Excellency an unwavering and energetic support, and therefore in your mouth a prayer for a magnanimous measure will not sound like the echo of a momentary excitement, but like the conclusion of powerful intelligence and ripe experience, and the utterance of unshaken and faithful love to his Majesty the King and the country.

The Assembly broke up on January 20th, and on the next day Stein, who had left Münster for Cappenberg on the 18th, wrote his letter to Prince Wilhelm. He begins by reflexions on the behaviour of the Estates during their session of 39 days. He reports that the natives of the old provinces show much loyalty;

only in the territory of Münster there reigns a propensity to find fault with all the measures of the Government, a want of sympathy with it and its organs, and that in this respect all classes are alike, and the salon is in agreement with the alehouse. The cause of this antipathy is Catholicism, and the clumsy treatment of it by Minister v. Altenstein, in censure of whom Archbishop, Bishop, Member of Consistory, Professor, &c. are in absolute unison, also the sense of the loss of privileges which the upper classes suffered through the fall of the spiritual aristocracy, and a peculiar ponderous pride, characteristic of the Münsterlander and founded on his sense of considerable prosperity.

He proceeds to discharge the Commission which the Estates had given him in plain language, which it is not necessary to quote.

In drawing up his letter he had consulted the printed report of the proceedings of the Estates, and was surprised to find the whole address of the Estates to him as Marshal printed at length. He

wrote at once to Hüffer, the responsible person, remarking that no resolution had been passed that this extract should be printed, that he had himself declared expressly to Hüffer that it ought not to be printed, and had said that a confidential communication such as was contemplated, if it should take the form of a printed report distributed among 64 persons (the number of voters), was something like the confidential discharge of a cannon. It seems that Vincke was equally surprised, for he speaks of 'the 400 printed copies that have been made to gratify the vanity of some Members.' Prince Wilhelm unfortunately saw the printed report before he received Stein's official letter. He considered that such publicity given to the proposal altered its character, and his opinion was approved at Berlin, whence he received instructions to pronounce it a violation of the Edict of 1824, by which the Provincial Estates had been created, and in which their deliberations had been restricted to the affairs of the Province. Thus the affair ended disagreeably. Stein was not satisfied with the decision of the Government, maintaining that the Edict had only intended to prevent for example the Westphalian Estates from discussing Silesian affairs, and quoting instances in which the Estates had been allowed to deliberate on matters affecting the whole Monarchy alike. He pronounced that 'the competence of the Estates to pass resolutions on questions affecting the interest of the Province and the Monarchy being undeniable, uncontested and incapable of being contested without almost entirely passing over the institution of Estates, it follows that the Westphalian

Estates were competent to present petitions having reference to a States-General.'

In May the Prince and Princess visited Münster, and took Cappenberg on the way. They took lunch with Stein on the 20th.

Arndt knows something of what passed at this interview. According to him,

> Before they sat down Stein took the Prince and his Aide-de-Camp, Count Anton Stolberg, into a private room, and lectured them both in the strongest language. He told them that the time was not so easy and soft that they should have reported to the King in such easy and soft euphuisms and circumlocutions the momentous matters, the just and necessary wishes and claims, which the faithful Estates had been forced to express and to make. They should have put before the King in frankest and plainest directness all the seriousness, all the fearfulness which the time was big with, and how it could only be treated with strong heroic remedies. Indeed he rated both so that the Princess, who could hear all in the salon, turned pale, for on such a subject he could speak in a thundering voice. And then he closed by saying, 'Now we have had it out, Royal Highness, come and let us drink a glass of wine.'

By the side of this somewhat blustering story it is curious to place Stein's own account of the same interview. He writes, 'Their Royal Highnesses were so good as to take lunch here on May 20th. They were very friendly and affable, *not a word was said on the affair of the Estates, it was treated just as if it had never happened*, and yet it *has* happened and will revive again at the 4th session.'

Arndt need not have fallen into this error, for the letter which so flatly contradicts the rumour he had heard was already printed in Pertz before his book appeared.

Stein's life ends here; the little that remains to be said refers to his death. This was an event to which he had long looked forward, not so much with resignation as with yearning. The infirmities of old age are not equally trying to all temperaments; perhaps to Stein, though in outward circumstances his last years were as happy as a man could pray for, they were more afflicting than to those who had not placed their whole happiness in action. To get the right thing done, to attack incapacity and expel it from office, to make bold and hazardous resolutions, to inspire kings and emperors with energy, and to support them against the misgivings of feebleness, everywhere to feel his will active and effective, this had been life to him, and for the absence of this literary enterprises and provincial politics might be a solace but could not be a compensation. Add to this that for a year or two now he had been alone. One important and anxious task had been bequeathed to him by his wife, the care of two daughters just entering upon womanhood. Arndt retained a strong impression of the anxiety which this charge caused him; 'it disquieted him very much,' he says, 'and he allowed his disquiet to appear very plainly.' But this task too was now with those done and finished, and there was calm at home as well as fair weather out of doors. Henriette was married in 1825 to Hermann Giech, an Imperial Count, of whom Stein writes the following particulars to Spiegel. 'His estates, Turnau, &c., lie between Bamberg and Bayreuth; they are important, as he belongs to the Hereditary Councillors of Bavaria; he has been formed by the ordinary academic education, and his

appointment in the Bavarian Embassies of London and Paris; at present he is managing his estates, paying his parents' debts, &c., but I advised him not to quit the official career. We have known him since 1821; he visited us here in December and pleased us all.' The wedding took place in October, 1825. In after years the Giechs were often visited by Arndt in the old house at Nassau, which went to Henriette. The marriage seems to have been happy, but the Count, while still a young man, became totally blind.

Two years later, in June, 1827, Stein wrote to the same clerical friend, Spiegel, about the other daughter, Therese: 'My youngest daughter is betrothed to Count Kielmansegge, the eldest son of my brother-in-law. He is a well-educated, clever, and amiable young man; he made his entrance into the world in 1815 at Waterloo, studied at Berlin and Göttingen in 1816, 1817, accompanied General Walmoden in his march to Naples and Sicily, and in 1825 and 1826 was with General Dörnberg at St Petersburg, where he witnessed the scenes of December. He is now Aide-de-Camp to the Duke of Cambridge.' In making a similar announcement to another friend he adds, 'I do not like his Hannoverian official position; after a little time it must be given up.' The wedding was fixed for August, and seems to have taken place then. Thus by the end of 1827 Stein was relieved of the cares of a father, and at the same time left in solitude.

As early as 1817 he had lost the use of his right eye, since which time he had been forbidden to read

in the evenings. In 1829 and the early part of 1830 his health began perceptibly to fail. Besides gout and frequent coughs he suffered from attacks of overpowering giddiness. About March he had one of these, which deprived him of consciousness; on recovering himself he was heard to say, 'Ah! if I were young I would go to Greece.' But in July, when his illness returned, his hold on life seemed to have slackened. Bodelschwingh during that visit to Nassau, in which he brought to Stein the news of the July Revolution, did not hear him give utterance to wishes of this kind. He yearned now no longer after Greece, and would listen to no consolations founded on the prospect of a continuance of life. It was now his comfort to think that the end was near. 'At 72 the best course one can take,' he said, 'is to die;' and when another fit of unconsciousness seized him one morning in his garden, a fit so profound that Bodelschwingh thought him dead, his language on reviving was not such as he had held in the spring. He clung now firmly to the thought of death, and refused to follow his adviser's prescription further than might suffice to avert the charge of suicide.

It is natural for us to inquire at this point what was Stein's religion, though certainly he was far from being one of those who regard religion more as a comfort in death than as a guide in life. In our long narrative we have not yet found an opportunity of speaking directly on this subject, though we have seen Stein throughout professing, and considered by others, to be a religious man. The explanation of this is very simple, and it is easy to

give it to English people by reminding them of the lines in which King Arthur shows how it is impossible for him to join the quest for the Holy Grail. Stein was detained from occupations purely religious by a function which left him no leisure. And though the King of Prussia did not require his services again after the Peace, he did not cease to be in some sense in office; his thoughts were still forced into the same channel by an irresistible vocation. Whether he is at the Council-board or in lonely banishment, or in domestic leisure, he thinks always of politics, and he thinks of them not as a party man to whom the excitement of strife has become necessary, but as a patriot to whom the general well-being has become identical with his own, I might almost say as a king or emperor who has been dedicated by solemn anointing to the public weal. And thus with him as with the Arthur of romance it has become in a manner irreligious to be too religious. At least the luxuries of religious contemplation are not for him, nor can he show his religion to others, except to the few who can read the language of deeds. In the whole mass of Stein's letters there is scarcely one which tells us what he himself in his own mind thought of religion, and this for the simple reason that there is scarcely one which is not political. They remind us of what Arndt said, 'Stein is never confidential, and indeed scarcely knows how to be.' Such life-long silence, such natural, invincible reticence may easily be misunderstood. It may be taken for mere emptiness or dryness of soul; but it marks not less often the greatest and deepest characters.

But in Stein's reserve on this subject there was nothing in the least degree diplomatic or calculated. He does not in fact avoid religious questions; only under his pen they become converted at once into political or administrative questions, because it is as a politician and administrator that he considers himself called and expected to speak of them. On their purely religious aspect he is, for the most part, inarticulate, not from want of interest, still less from secret scepticism, but from depth of feeling and diffidence. Although therefore religion cannot be made prominent in his biography, yet there is no difficulty in stating in general how he regarded it.

He was then a believer. He did not merely like his contemporaries Goethe and W. v. Humboldt look forward with hope to a future life: this indeed he did as a matter of course, and it may be remarked that he did it without effort, not as one who bears up manfully against misgivings, but easily and habitually. To him death is always the entrance to a better state of existence; as he approaches it he is gladdened not by the thought that it will relieve him of a load of weariness, but by the hope of glorious things to be revealed by it. When the bright valley of the Lahn stretched out under his Burg pleased his aged eye, he murmured, 'How much more beautiful will it be yonder!' This habitual serene belief gave its tone to his character. It exempted him from all that is worst in human suffering. The feeling of despair was only known, only conceivable, to him in a form so mild as hardly to deserve the name. When he saw civilisation to all appearance crushed under Napoleon's heel, we may

say he despaired for a while, but all the time he never doubted that there were other regions accessible to the victims of this tyranny, regions of blessed and secure liberty. When he felt the approach of old age he writes to a friend that he feels tired of life, but he adds that he yearns to be reunited to the loved ones who have laid down the burden before him. That far more desperate despair which overtakes so many in these days in the midst of prosperity, and which makes the slightest visitation of calamity intolerable, the disbelief in life itself and in the whole order of the universe, was happily unknown to him.

Goethe, who declared that 'no strong-minded man allowed himself to be frightened by a coffin,' or W. v. Humboldt, who told his brother in dying that he was about to enter upon a higher order of things, may have resembled Stein in this, though both had known much more than he knew of doubt. But their faith had little connexion with Christianity, and was rather similar to that which was attained in some of the philosophic schools of antiquity. They were, as Goethe himself phrased it, 'not unchristian, still less antichristian, but non-christian.' They turned their eyes away from the whole Christian and medieval system of things, to fix them with conscious preference on the antique world. Stein, on the other hand, belonged at heart to the Christian and Germanic world. He seldom shows any interest in the Greeks and Romans, and the studies which he pursued with such zeal and which became in his last years so methodical never tempted him beyond the times, or much beyond

the frontiers, of his Teutonic forefathers. Of that eighteenth-century Renaissance, that rebellion against the whole tradition, particularly the religious tradition of modern Europe, which possessed the more active-minded among his contemporaries he knows scarcely anything. The whole philosophy of his time seems to run off him like water. German systems, from Kant to Hegel, he disregards, and the rationalistic tendencies of German theology he dislikes; as to the earlier influences of which France had been the source, while he admits them without difficulty in politics and economy—for he listens to Turgot and Adam Smith, admires Frederick the Great, and cordially accepts all that is humane in the earlier teachings of Liberalism—yet he never writes a word that seems to have been suggested either by Voltaire or Rousseau, he has no sympathy for Joseph II. nor is ever betrayed even momentarily into approbation of the French Revolution. Whether he ever felt any spiritual disquiet we cannot tell, for if he had, it would have been quite foreign to his character to have given utterance to it. But at the bottom of his mind we seem to find what may be called, in the large original sense of the word, piety. This man holds with his ancestors; if others say that their work, whether in State or Church, must be treated as rubbish, he says, 'No, it is fundamentally good;' if others say that their thoughts, whether in religion or politics, were false, he says, 'No, they were true.'

How this could be so with respect to politics, and how such esteem for the past could be consistent with the most decisive thoroughness in reform, I

trust this narrative has made clear. The rebellion of the intellectual class in politics had been caused very mainly by their exclusion from practical politics, and by the unbounded license which was given to their political speculations in the *salon* and in the study. From this Stein was saved, first by springing out of a political family in which the best traditions of the old Empire survived, secondly by an uninterrupted career of administrative work. These conditions enabled him without falling into officialism to escape political metaphysics, and without indulging in any professional self-sufficiency calmly to regard most of the theorists as men misled by a false method. But these same theorists who were ready to turn the political world upside down were also, for the most part, the bitterest opponents of religion and the Christian Church. One who saw so clearly their shallowness in one department, was likely to suspect it in others.

Again, the Voltairian contempt for the past arose in great measure from the obscurity which had gathered over its history. The Middle Ages were ridiculed for their quaintness and oddity by lively moderns who had neither knowledge nor comprehension of them. Stein, by his origin, stood near enough to these medieval institutions to see in part the unreasonableness of such ridicule, and to be roused to indignation by it. He knew in himself what knighthood was; he compared the paralytic feebleness into which the Empire had fallen in his own time with its vigour in the age of the Hohenstauffen. While others therefore wanted to blot out the whole past of the world, and to treat reason and

common sense as products of the 18th century, he saw the matter differently. In German history at least he saw decay in the 17th and 18th centuries, and further back he saw a Germany it would be worth while to revive. It was this observation which put him upon the great literary enterprise of his old age. It was an observation that could not but lead him to suspect the whole Voltairian view of history to be equally shallow. It inclined him to reject beforehand all modern sneers at great and ancient institutions; and of these the greatest, most ancient, and most bitterly attacked, was the Church.

Thus disposed from the beginning to take the side of religion, he was affected during the course of his life by other influences which drew him in the same direction. He himself declared that he owed much to 'a pious mother and a still more pious elder sister.' The spirit of self-sacrifice displayed by his mother, springing, as it seems, visibly out of her Christian belief, made a lasting impression upon him, and the family still preserve an English poem, copied out by his hand near the end of his mother's life, in which a son describes the gradual decline of a passionately venerated mother—

> I hail the mother and the saint in one,
> And pay beyond the homage of a son.

These feminine influences mingled strangely in his imperious and ultra-masculine temperament, and make him seem like some Gothic chief, some Adolphus, subdued by the charm of Christian womanhood. The blending produced at times a humorous

trait. Thus, in his last year, when he fell into what seems to have been an old family habit of rating the French nation, he told Bodelschwingh 'that he hated the French as far as it was allowed to a Christian to hate, and that, in fact, he wished the devil might take them all;' and when Bodelschwingh questioned whether Christian liberty could fairly be stretched so far, he answered, 'May be, but I can't help myself.'

Then came another influence. In his youth he might suspect the fashionable speculations to be shallow, but at least they seemed triumphant. Voltaire was crowned with laurels; in the very Church itself of France Christianity seemed almost dead; and in the country of his own adoption an infidel had sat on the throne for forty years, and was the admiration of Europe. But twenty years later the aspect of affairs had changed. The new philosophy had had its turn. Rousseau's theories, both political and religious, had been reduced to practice, and France had openly broken with religion. The result had been first an outbreak of anarchy in France, next a reign of lawlessness in international affairs, ending in a universal tyranny. This was one of those large and palpable refutations which impress practical, historical minds. It displayed vividly the hollowness of the millennium promised by philosophy, and it raised proportionally the credit of the beliefs and institutions which philosophy had so rashly destroyed. To the conservatism which had survived in his ancient family, to the soberness which practical experience of public affairs had given him, was now added the great lesson of a disastrous time.

Just when this lesson had been driven home by the fall of Prussia, another of similar purport was given to him and to Europe. In the last extremity rescue came just from those countries in which the ancient beliefs were strongest, and from the inspiring power of those beliefs themselves. First Spain, then the Tirol, then Russia, resisted and taught Europe to resist the tyrant who had subdued the whole region of modern enlightenment. As a ruler, as a student of the influences which move great masses of people, Stein had always valued religion, and held cheap the philosophies which speak only to the few. This esteem became enthusiasm in the great uprising of Europe, and in this hour of trial he felt in himself the faith which he knew how to use in others.

Thus the struggle with France confirmed him in religion. Yet it did not blind him to the value of those humanitarian ideas which, though not introduced, were furthered by the successes of France. These ideas he accepts and embodies in institutions, but he does not, on that account, relax his hostility to the French movement. For things appeared to him in other proportions than they wear to us. To us those ideas may seem the important part of the movement, vastly outweighing that transient Napoleonic tyranny with which they were associated; but to him the Napoleonic tyranny seemed the main thing, a universal and almost irresistible evil, and the humanitarian ideas only the honey in which the poison was administered. And this view would still appear the true one, but for the unexpected and well-nigh miraculous fall of Napoleon, brought about by the efforts of Stein himself and the other champions of Europe.

But all these influences may seem only likely to incline him to a sort of political religion, to an approbation of Christianity as a good basis for national well-being. And indeed it is true that of this political religion more is to be found in Stein's letters than of what would be called personal religion; nor, I think, would Stein have been ashamed to confess that he held it one of the principal functions of religion to supply that agreement in elementary principles without which a well-ordered state is not conceivable. If we inquire what religion Stein cherished for himself, for the support of his own soul, we miss much which the common views of religion regard as essential. There is no trace of any anxieties or terrors, no sense of danger or deliverance from the sense of danger. Everything that relates to what is called 'the saving of the soul' is absent; we have before us in fact a man not given to terrors of any kind, and too much accustomed to think about others, and too much occupied about the general welfare, to have time for such intense personal regards. So at least it appears, but this opinion is only gathered from his silence. He never assails or disavows such introspective religion, and so far as it might be favoured by the Church in which he was bred, probably regarded it with respect. But if he accepted it at all in theory it does not seem that he in any degree assimilated it.

What has been said of his sympathy for the creeds of the more primitive nations might lead us to suspect that he had some inclination, like so many of the German noblesse of his time, for Catholicism. He was connected with an ecclesiastical Court, the

traditions of his family and caste led him back to Catholic times, his love of the Middle Ages put him in connexion with the Catholicising party in the literary world. Accordingly we have seen him charged by Schön with such a tendency. In opposition to this we have to set the broad fact that he elected voluntarily to serve the great Protestant State of Germany, and remained faithful throughout his life to his preference for her. Again and again in his correspondence unstudied expressions occur showing that he habitually connected in his mind Protestantism with intelligence and honesty. Thus on the question of a Parliament we have seen him writing, 'I will not inquire whether the Austrian Cabinet acts worthily or wisely to take refuge in such sophistries, but . . . Prussia is a Protestant State, in which for 200 years a great and many-sided life and a spirit of free investigation has been developed, which can neither be suppressed nor misled by jugglery.' Are these the words of one who was at heart inclined to Catholicism? And Arndt has preserved reminiscences of his conversation which breathe quite the same spirit. He used to say, 'Thank Heaven, Dr Luther has made the entrance into heaven somewhat shorter by dismissing a crowd of door-keepers, chamberlains and masters of ceremonies.' And he might be heard in friendly conversation with a certain Catholic pastor named Fey, who owed to him an appointment at Landskron, to exclaim, 'We who pray with Luther and Calvin have beaten you who pray to saints in every battle we have had with you. And it could not be otherwise! One Commander in heaven will make

far stouter soldiers than a divided command. One God and still one God and God alone! Still to the One, to the Highest be heart and hands lifted up!' Nevertheless all this was without bitterness. A Catholic was to him always a Christian, that is an adherent of the faith which gave at once virtue and peace of mind, beyond comparison nearer to the truth than the unbeliever, and nearer too, I think he would have said, than the Rationalist. But when he spoke of the Jesuits he showed bitterness. 'Our Germany,' he said, 'may say of them that the wounds they inflicted between the years 1570 and 1650 are not healed yet.' And he speaks with disgust of the Catholic agitation in the Netherlands which contributed so much to the Revolution of 1830.

But because he could not imagine religion but as a mighty popular force, blending, swaying and inspiring whole nations, he turned away from all theological systems which seemed fit only for the few, and he might at times drop a phrase about them which expressed a comparative approbation of Catholicism. Such phrases are to be taken as we take Wordsworth's 'Great God! I had rather be a Pagan suckled in a creed outworn!' Of this kind is his protest against the censures passed on Count Stolberg for his return to the ancient faith—'he finds in it rest and *definiteness;* why pursue him with anger and taunts?' Nevertheless in his correspondence as given by Pertz even such expressions are very rare. On the other hand condemnations of Rationalism are not rare, particularly in the letters of his last years, when he had more leisure to write on

such subjects. He called it hollow, empty; he held that it paralysed Christianity by depriving it of the character of an exceptional revelation, unique and mysterious. Thus he writes to his sister Marianne: 'I believe that we have a revelation which is quite different from a recognition of the truths of the reason, that Christ is true God and true Man; that his death has reconciled us to God; that virtue and happiness, unattainable without him, are the fruits of the redemption....' If these mysteries were denied or explained away he held that religion lost in the first place all its influence over the people; thus he writes:

Of pulpit eloquence the dry cold reason which loses itself in exegetical and metaphysical inquiries is incapable. An intellectual man thus trained will deliver instructive discourses, but will not touch the heart, and the great mass of middling preachers of this kind are to the uneducated unintelligible, to the half-educated tiresome, and to the educated intolerable. What then is the use of pulpit eloquence that empties the churches? But the sermon even of a very ordinary preacher who is humble, pious, and anxious for the spiritual welfare of his flock, finds ever a susceptible audience through the pious feeling that reigns in it, through the operation of the Spirit of God, through the power of prayer.

And besides he finds the absence of a commanding and awful religion demoralising to all classes:

If in old times those who worshipped Christ and his Father were often tempted away from the faith that made them happy by the threat of tortures, so now there is a supercilious way of thinking which despises all divine things, there are bad principles widely diffused which furnish an excuse for every passion and every breach of faith, and an easily applied sedative in the doctrine of the uselessness of all earnest and persevering effort; and this is the temptation, not less dangerous if less violent, which now swells the number of worldlings and commonplace people.

And here he goes on to indulge for once in language which may almost be called mystical:

> As a drop in the sea, as a spark in the flames, our earthly desires lose themselves in the love we dedicate to the Eternal. If before our pride which shook off every yoke and would follow but its own impulse was the source of all evil, humility now is the source of all good, listening only to the divine and never to the personal will, and whereas before we died because we lived but for ourselves, now we truly live because we are dead to ourselves.

It was thus he looked at the Churches and the theologies of the day, and in the last quotation we see how he could at times, in writing to his deeply pious sister, utter more intimate feelings. He touches here, as upon something on which he had deeply felt, upon the mystery of self-sacrifice or duty. Elsewhere we come upon traces, faint though frequent, of this strong conviction. All his friends remarked in him a rigid and watchful sense of duty. 'With Stein,' says Turgeneff, 'duty went before everything.' His friends remarked at the same time his religiousness. But in Stein's own mind the two things were one. We have remarked before his habit of using the compound adjective 'religious-moral.' By this habit he expresses a very strong conviction that religion and morality, however they may be separated in abstraction, are inseparable in the real world. As religion without morality would be to him a monstrosity, so he cannot understand any morality without religion. His own sense of duty, when he tries to analyse it, appears as a love to the Eternal absorbing selfish desires, and what is this but religion, the very religion we try, however imperfectly, to express in Christian worship?

Another conviction is expressed so often in his later letters that we are led to think that it must have been the result of some individual experience, and those who knew him in that part of his life were impressed in the same way. 'What strikes me most in him,' wrote Böhmer in 1824, 'is his reliance on Providence, although there are perhaps few men of his powers whose plans and hopes have been so much frustrated.' Böhmer had not, as we have now done, traced Stein's life carefully from year to year, and might therefore be at a loss to understand what had inspired Stein with this feeling, though he betrays his impression that some actual experience must have done it. We surely need not share his embarrassment. It cannot be difficult for us to see that no grander lesson of faith in Providence was ever given to any man than to Stein. To every one the fall of Napoleon and the unexpected deliverance of Europe came home as an event impressive far beyond the average of human history. But to what other man in Europe could it come home as it did to Stein? We in England never saw, and only heard of the tyrant's destroying armies. France, Austria, and the Confederation of the Rhine, were, more or less, identified with his cause. Only in Russia and Prussia could the sense of deliverance be unmixed and intense. Yet both the Russian and Prussian might be tempted to think rather of their own valour than of the 'mighty hand and outstretched arm,' and would see the successes of their own nation much more clearly than the general deliverance of civilisation from its imminent danger. Stein's position between Prussia and Russia gave

him a peculiarly comprehensive view of the transition, and forced him to be in some degree passive. Moreover, it was peculiar to him that the deliverance of Europe was absolutely identified with his own deliverance. The same stroke which overthrew the tyrant restored him to his home and country, to his property, and to his family. Through five years his own fortune and that of Europe had grown together, and in the lonely broodings of his exile he had still felt the misfortunes of Europe in and through the bitterness of his own, and had found his own personal sufferings merged and reflected in those of Europe. Hence it was that the experience of 1813 left a permanent mark upon his mind, and inspired him with a persuasion that there was no calamity so dark and universal, no prospect so impenetrable,—for had he not in 1809 been at his wits' end to think whence deliverance could come?—but that Providence might be trusted speedily and splendidly to restore the daylight. Hence from this time forward his religious mind, in moments of public perplexity, sustained itself, as did that of the Hebrew patriot, by remembering 'the years of the right hand of the Most Highest.' Those years to him were 1812—1815. He seeks comfort in history, in that history of which he has himself been witness; and in the midst of despondency feels his courage rise as he breaks out, 'The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee!'

The release upon which his heart was now firmly set came to him in the summer of 1831. On June 17th he appeared for the last time at the Assembly

of the Circle at Hamm. It was his intention to set out on the 24th for Pyrmont, where he was to meet his daughter Therese, who by this time had a little son, and where Pertz also was to meet him. From Pyrmont he meant to go to Nassau, where he was to remain till September. But on the 21st he was out in rain and caught a serious cold, which in seven days carried him off. On the evening of the 28th he spoke of his parents and of Minister Heinitz, remarking how much suffering had been saved them by the opportunity of their deaths, for the former had not seen the French on the Rhine, and the latter had not seen Jena. His views of what was in store for Europe seem to have been little less gloomy than those of Niebuhr. Shortly before this he had predicted, in conversation with his agent Poock, 'fearful wars, emigrations, and God knows what beside.' In the course of the night he awoke in fever and suffering from obstruction of breath, which continued through the next day. He had time to bid farewell to all the dependents of his house. As his children were absent, his last wishes were chiefly delivered to Poock. He exhorted him to serve his daughter Therese, who was to be his successor at Cappenberg—Henriette took Nassau—faithfully with 'the faithful service of the antique world,' adding, 'As I believe firmly in an enduring communion between the living and the dead, it will be a joy to me to see from above that you serve my children with the same true devotion you have shown to me.' One young forester he exhorted, if war should break out, to 'fight like a good Prussian for king and country.' At 3 o'clock in the afternoon

he received the sacrament, and afterwards spoke some words of anxiety but at the same time of firm faith concerning the future of the Church. He then lay down, fell gradually into a quiet sleep, and about 6 o'clock was seen to turn on his left side, breathe a deep sigh, and pass.

Some days later Pertz kept his appointment at Pyrmont, where Therese had arrived, and where he expected to find her father. He hastened to the house, was shown into a room, and soon saw Therese enter in mourning dress, and heard her say in reply to his inquiries, 'What! you do not know that my father died on Wednesday!'

He rests by his parents and his wife at Frücht, his own village, which lies not far from Ems, and looks down into the valley of the Rhine. The inscription on his tomb is as follows:

HEINRICH FRIEDRICH KARL IMPERIAL BARON VOM UND ZUM STEIN,
born October 27th, 1757,
died June 29th, 1831,
lies here;
the last of his knightly family, which flourished on the Lahn for seven hundred years;
humble before God, haughty before men,
an enemy of falsehood and of injustice,
highly-gifted in duty and honour,
invincibly firm in proscription and banishment,
he stood erect when Germany bowed the knee,
and in battle and victory was among those who freed her.
'I have a desire to depart
and to be with Christ.'

In a history it may be fitting to add to the record of the death of an eminent person a formal summary

of his character, because in a history the entrances and exits of individuals are but incidents. It is otherwise in a biography. From the beginning of this book to the end I have been describing Stein's character, and little remains to be said of it. He was mourned by the few old friends who survived him, by Vincke, Rehberg, Gagern, Arndt, and by the younger generation to whom he had been known mainly as the venerable representative of a great historic period, by Turgeneff, Böhmer, Pertz. He was lamented at Cappenberg and Nassau, and multitudes of mourning vassals followed the funeral procession of their famous, imperious, but most munificent chief. But it does not seem that any such universal sense of bereavement was felt in Germany as might have been looked for at the departure of him who might be called the founder of the modern German nation. His death was to the general public but the news of a day, so slightly felt that probably no one in France or England remarked that Germany had suffered a great loss. That Germany had great men and knew how to prize them had been already shown at Goethe's eightieth birthday, and was soon to be shown again at his death. But the great men of Germany were poets and philosophers, or else they were kings. Who had ever heard of a German statesman who was more than a mere official, or whose death could concern the general public? It had been a rare exceptional case when Stein himself in 1808 had for a moment excited public enthusiasm; but he had soon passed out of sight again, and with the return of peace and the disappointment of their first poli-

tical hopes the Germans had returned with fresh eagerness to their books. They were now as busy with Hegel as they had been with Kant before the battle of Jena. Goethe's old age was courted by troops of friends, the romanticist fever was running itself out, and in some of Stein's later letters the new names of Börne and Heine appear. Public opinion had begun again to run in its old groove, and knew perhaps little more of Stein at the time of his death than it had known of him before the Peace of Tilsit brought him to the front.

Add to this that what political feeling existed had passed into another mood, and only half relished such a character as Stein's. In a review which appeared in 1833 of Gagern's collection of Stein's letters Assessor Reck of Göttingen remarks: 'Perhaps many will say, as some perverse Frankfurt people said at Goethe's death, There is one old aristocrat the fewer.' And indeed this view seems to have been really taken, for Arndt complains of those who called Stein an ultra-aristocrat or 'a Baron and nothing more.'

The truth was that the great breach of promise committed by the Prussian and the other German Governments had gone far towards undoing the work of Stein, and bringing into Germany that Revolution which he had so long averted. So long as he ruled, or others ruled in his spirit, bitterness of feeling could not spring up, nor that perverted view of Government which represents it as a natural enemy, an object of suspicion and a butt of agitation. But he had lived to see this perversion take place and German opinion echo French in the second

French Revolution. It was the inevitable result of the policy of 1822. Since then even Prussia was much sunk, though not by any means entirely or irremediably, for at this very time she was creating the Zollverein. But what shall be said of the other German States which had known not only no Stein or Hardenberg, but no House of Hohenzollern? Here had long worked the same concealed disease that France had borne within her early in the reign of Louis XV., a profound social injustice which could not but arouse revolutionary frenzy as soon as the people, grown more attentive to public affairs, should become clearly aware of it. And thus before Stein died the unanimity of the Liberation period was gone in Germany, the harmony between people and Government, the child-like loyalty which had shone in such characters as Arndt. Disgust for the old order of things, and particularly for the noblesse, had set in, and in the excitement of 1831 the people were not in the humour to worship any one who bore the title of Baron. If all old fashions were fallen into disrepute, Stein was in more danger of suffering than most others, for few indeed even of the noblesse had roots so deeply buried in the past, or were so old-fashioned as he.

But there was a misunderstanding here. Of an old institution the oldest parts are often the least corrupt, and this is especially true of aristocracy. The great rebellion against aristocracy, which has embittered continental politics ever since Rousseau, has been directed far less against aristocracy itself than against a pinchbeck modern imitation of it. The aristocracy which Louis XIV. corrupted by

drawing it into his Court, and that with which the imitators of Louis XIV. surrounded their petty thrones in Germany, may deserve all the bitter satire they have met with in recent times. Insolent towards the people and mendicants towards the throne, such courtier-nobles serve no public purpose, and pervert the moral sense in one part of the community, while they exasperate it in another. An independent aristocracy is another thing. Even this may have its inconveniences, or rather it may be a thing which it is exceedingly difficult to maintain in an incorrupt state. It may easily lose the sense of public function, of a conditional tenure of wealth and honours, without which aristocracy is nothing but a name for wealth mellowed by time and good nurture. But the absence of such a class of hereditary officials, paid by endowment and not by salary, is always painfully felt, at least in all states which need any high organisation. Where such a class exists, with only a little public spirit and sense of responsibility, it often renders indispensable services. And when the ideal of a genuine noble is really reached or approached, no society can afford either to proscribe or despise it.

Many years afterwards Schön wrote that Stein reminded him of Lord Grey, whom he found English writers speaking of as 'a very noble person.' He meant plainly to convey that the type was rapidly becoming obsolete. And it is true that Stein would perhaps find it hard to reconcile his ideas with the world such as it has now become. He says himself that in all his politics he assumes the Germans to be an agricultural people. The modern world of

factories, railways and crowded streets would be strange to him. His home is in fields and woods. There he lives among a peasantry whom he knows individually, into whose cottages he goes freely. All alike enjoy the country sights and sounds which surround them, and rather worship Nature than try to subdue her. Meanwhile they pay court to him and he protects and relieves them. The splendid baronial almsgiving of Cappenberg wears now an old-fashioned appearance; not that it was really behind the age in Stein's own time, but that the patriarchal life of old Germany has since been broken up. In this outward sense all types grow obsolete. But those who confounded Stein in the herd of German nobles mistook the man, and confounded the sterling coin with the counterfeit. About him there was nothing of the age of Louis XIV. No courtier he, no child of privilege, insolently supplanting low-born merit, irreligiously conceiting himself to be made of better clay, than other men! When he calls himself Baron and Knight he avows himself to be set apart by his birth to study the public good, to mind great affairs, to guide and protect his humble neighbours, and most particularly against the tyranny of the Court. In performing this hereditary function he does not overlook the change of times. He neglects no modern studies, puts forward no antiquated claims, but adds all the skill of the Prussian official to the traditions of his knightly house. He would hold it dishonourable to make use of his precedence so as to keep others back; there is nothing he likes better than unbarring restrictions, throwing open closed doors, cancelling disabilities. But though so much at home in the

modern world, though so free from the vices against which Liberalism protests, yet he brings out of the Middle Ages virtues which the modern world does not so readily produce. Knightly honour and religious duty are with him practical realities; tasks of government fall to him naturally as they fall to a king; and so he is never found flattering either a Court or a faction or a constituency for promotion; he is *consul non unius anni*, thinking of public affairs habitually and with the same earnestness when he is in retirement as when he is in office; finally, in the most divided of nations, a nation which had forgotten to respect itself, he is enabled by his knightly breeding without affectation to think, speak, and act patriotically, nor ever suffers his clear national feeling to be clouded either by the sophistries which made patriotism an empty name to his German contemporaries, or by the blind party passions which obscure it in the public men of other countries.

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